CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT New Foreign Minister of Bulgaria optimistic as to chances of avoiding war in the Balkans.

mr

770.00/4784

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #20, 4 p.m.
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Mar. 1, 1940 **From / To** Bulgaria (Millard)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/1748

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT

British Foreign Office reflects a certain satisfaction at the outcome of the recent meeting of the Balkan Entente.

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel#379 7 p.m.
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Feb. 13, 1940 From Great Britain (Johnson)

File No. 760d.61/1096 Confidential File.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

ml

770.00/785

GP

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Political affairs - Balkans.
Italian press comments with regard to the Balkans.

rr

770.00/786

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See ~~#1760~~
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Feb.16, 1940 From / To Italy (Phillips)

File No. 865.00/1883

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

EP 7

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Meeting of the Balkan Entente;

General feeling in Rome is that the-
will not bring forth anything startling
in the nature of formal declarations.

mr

770.00/787

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See #1738
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Feb. 2, 1940 **From / To** Italy (Reed)

File No. 865.00/1881

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

FP 787

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Formation of a Balkan bloc. Conversation with Yugoslav colleague who believes that the Italian Government is opposed to the- which might be sufficiently powerful to act as a check on italian political and economic ambitions in Southeastern Europe.

770.00/ 788

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. 160- 6pm
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated March 6,1940 From / To Italy (Philips)

File No. 760h.65/896

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

FRJ

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

770.00/ 789

SUBJECT The Rumanian Foreign Minister said his country was unwilling to consider the Dobrudja question now but agreed that this claim unlike the Hungarian and Russian ones was legitimate; The Bulgarian Prime Minister referring to ,- said this was first time a Rumanian Foreign Minister had admitted justice of Bulgarian claim before Entente members.

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel.#11 6 p m
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Feb. 13 1940 From / To Bulgaria (Millard)

File No. 770.00/764

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

FP 786

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LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 867

Belgrade, February 7, 1940.

Subject: Memoranda of Conversations with Balkan Diplomatic Officials relating to the Conference of the Balkan Entente in Belgrade.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
MAR 20 1940
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1940

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
APR 5 - 1940
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
MAR 26 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

770.02

770.00/790

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
APR - 1 1940
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
A-M/C

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

With reference to my telegram No. 37, of February 6, 7 p.m., I have the honor to attach hereto two memoranda of conversations:

1.- Between the Greek Minister in Belgrade and myself on February 5, 1940, at 6:30 p.m.;

2.- Between Secretary Mardin, of the Turkish Embassy here and Mr. Joyce, on February 5, 1940.

Respectfully yours,

Arthur Bliss Lane.

Arthur Bliss Lane.

Enclosures: as stated.

File No. 710
RPJ/iv

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American Legation, Belgrade.
Enclosure No. 1 to Despatch No. 867,
February 7, 1940.

MEMORANDUM

of Conversation with the Greek Minister, Mr. Raoul Bibica-Rosetti, on February 5, 1940, 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Rosetti, who had offered to call on me to tell me about the results of the Balkan Entente Meeting, said that nothing sensational took place. Nevertheless, in his opinion a great deal of good came out of the meeting, all four representatives having been in accord.

I remarked on the little time which the Delegates had for discussions and asked whether everything had not been arranged prior to the meeting. He said that perhaps Gafenco and Cincar-Marković had arranged matters between them but that certainly Metaxas did not know what was to be discussed beforehand. The meetings were informal and private, only the four delegates being present. The diplomatic representatives here did not take part in the discussions, nor were any secretaries present. There were five meetings in all, three morning meetings, each lasting between an hour and an hour and a half, and two afternoon meetings, lasting two hours each. He emphasized that the meetings were devoted purely to informal discussions of questions such as "what do you think about this, or what do you think about that?" He said there was no discussion of economic questions and emphasized that when an economic conference took place, the date not having been fixed, only questions relating solely to relations between the Balkan Entente States will be taken up. The matter of the blockade would not be discussed.

Due to the position of Turkey, which has certain commitments with Great Britain and France, it was considered unwise to make references to Hungary, Bulgaria and Italy in the communiqué. These views were expressed by Gafenco and Cincar-Marković in the speeches which they exchanged, thereby making only Rumania and Yugoslavia responsible. (It is probably for this reason that the meeting was held prior to February 9, on which date Saraçoglu becomes President of the Council). Thus the Rumanian Foreign Minister, as President, was called upon to make the speech in reply to Cincar-Marković's address.

I said in strict confidence that the Hungarian Minister had told me in no uncertain terms, prior to the conference, that Hungary would object to being mentioned in a communiqué. Mr. Rosetti said that Hungary might have objected to being mentioned in an official communiqué, but it could not object to a speech couched in friendly terms by the Foreign Ministers of Rumania and Yugoslavia.

I referred to Gafenco's allusion to a "regional entente" and remarked that this appeared as though Rumania still hoped that the formation of a Balkan and Danubian bloc could be effected. Mr. Rosetti said that Gafenco having originated the idea still holds on to it. "It is his baby", he said, "and he has the pride of paternity". Italy, however, is still opposed to this bloc.

As

As to the attitude of the great powers towards the Entente meeting, he said he had talked a few days ago with the German Minister who, emphasizing that he had just returned from Berlin and therefore knew the views of his Government, had stated that Germany is entirely in accord that a policy of neutrality and peace should be adopted by the Balkan Entente; that Germany wants merely the continuation of the present situation in the Balkans and if this is the case, Germany will take no action. On the other hand, if Germany does not obtain the supplies which have been promised her, or if the Balkan States should adopt an unneutral policy against Germany, that would be quite another matter. As for Italy, she apparently desires peace and neutrality in the Balkans. She gives herself credit for the consolidation of this policy by the Balkan Entente. Yugoslavia's enthusiasm in her frank statement of policy in Cincar-Marković's speech shows that Yugoslavia feels she is supported by Italy. Hungary, on the other hand, is clearly dissatisfied. She feels that she was let down by Germany with regard to Slovakia and that she was let down by Italy at Venice. Csaky hoped for the support of Ciano to compel Rumania to make territorial concessions. Ciano was impatient regarding Csaky's attitude and said that there was a question of far greater importance than Hungary's territorial aspirations and that was the maintenance of peace in Southeastern Europe. He persuaded Csaky, therefore, to put off his territorial claims. Csaky was upset that Italy has made a rapprochement with Rumania over the head of Hungary. Rosetti said that the Hungarian Minister reflects the bitter attitude of his Government in indicating that as soon as the war is over, Hungary will obtain what she wants from Rumania, by force if necessary.

I brought up the question of what the members of the Entente had decided in the event that the Entente were attacked, and specifically in the event that Russia should attack Rumania. Mr. Rosetti said that none of the possible eventualities had been discussed as such discussions would be unnecessarily futile, so many possibilities existing. For instance, there is the possibility of an attack by Germany on Yugoslavia, with Italy remaining neutral; the possibility of a German attack on Hungary or Rumania, with Italy helping Germany or helping the smaller countries, etc. etc. He said that in the event of some specific attack, it would be an easy matter to convoke a special meeting of the Council to discuss the matter and to take a decision.

As to the possibility of an Italian-Turkish détente, he indicated that relations between the two countries had greatly improved but that it is too early yet to make any definite prognostication.

Belgrade, February 5, 1940.

ABL/iv

American Legation, Belgrade,
Enclosure No. 2 to Despatch No. 867,
February 7, 1940.

MEMORANDUM

of Conversation with Secretary Mardin, of the Turkish Embassy, on February 5, 1940.

1. Meeting of the Four Foreign Ministers in Belgrade.

Mr. Mardin said that the meetings themselves were attended only by the Foreign Ministers of the four countries, the diplomatic representatives of the countries in Belgrade not having been invited to attend any sessions whatever. No secretary or interpreter was present during the five executive sessions, which were conducted in the French language. Mr. Mardin indicated that his Ambassador, the Rumanian Ambassador and the Greek Minister were all a little offended that they were to all intents and purposes left out of the conference entirely.

Mr. Mardin continued by saying that all four countries definitely considered that the conference was a success, in fact much more so than the conference which took place last year. This was probably due principally to the fact that highly controversial issues and questions were not gone into. For example, Rumanian-Hungarian relations were not discussed, nor were the economic and political relationships of the member countries with the belligerent powers. It was recognized that a discussion of these subjects would lead to innumerable divergences of opinion and that it would be impossible for the four members of the Balkan Entente to arrive at any common policy with regard to them.

2. Relations with Bulgaria.

Mr. Mardin reiterated that Foreign Minister Saraçoglu was very much pleased with his talk with Kiosseivanov and that satisfactory assurances had been received that Bulgaria would "play ball" with the Balkan Entente, would remain quiet and do nothing which would disturb the peace in Southeastern Europe, leaving her territorial claims for future peaceful negotiation. Mr. Mardin said that it was arranged by telephone today for Mr. Saraçoglu to be received tomorrow in Sofia by King Boris, and that following this audience Mr. Saraçoglu would have luncheon with Mr. Kiosseivanov. They would then have a discussion which would last until Saraçoglu left Sofia at about four thirty tomorrow.

3. Yugoslavia and the Balkan Entente.

Mr. Mardin said that Rumania, Greece and Turkey, especially the latter, were all much pleased with Yugoslavia's cooperative attitude, which was greatly in contrast with its attitude during the last Balkan Entente conference, when Yugoslavia had "held back" and had shown a suspicious attitude towards Turkey in particular.

4. Balkan Entente and Hungary.

Mr. Mardin said that it had recently become very apparent that Hungary definitely did not desire that the conference be a success.

Hungary

Hungary, he said, was still interested in an Italo-Yugoslav-Hungarian bloc as opposed to any regional understanding involving the Balkan countries. He went on to say that the Hungarian Minister had called on the Turkish Ambassador this morning to inquire whether, should the Soviet Union invade Rumania, Turkey, under any arrangement that may have been reached at the conference, would come to the military assistance of Rumania. Mr. Mardin was a little vague as to what answer Baron Bessenyey received, but my impression is that he was told that Turkey would not come to Rumania's assistance.

Belgrade, February 5, 1940.

RPJ/hln.
iv.

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February 7, 1940.

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ABL/lv

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Belgrade, February 5, 1940.

RPJ/hlm.
iv.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

March 27, 1940.

Summary of Despatch no. 1225, from Legation at Bucharest, dated February 9, 1940.

Subject: The Balkan Entente Conference as Viewed in Bucharest.

Mr. Gunther senses a definite atmosphere of relief in Bucharest since the Conference and he finds that there is a new hope and a less acute fear of war.

Of particular interest to him is the more conciliatory attitude shown to Bulgaria and Hungary by Rumania. There have been several press articles indicating this change of attitude. "If the idea of a post-war adjustment is creeping into the local press and is even hinted in official quarters, not to mention the gratified references to the recent visits of Foreign Minister Sarajoglu and his Secretary General (Menemenjoglu) with Bulgarian Premier Kioseivanov, it can only mean a new ray of hope is breaking through the hitherto entirely black clouds of Bulgarian-Rumanian relations".

Mr. Gunther says that if Bulgarian relations with the Entente have improved markedly, the raison d'etre of the Entente ceases in many respects and the idea of a

regional

regional bloc becomes a near reality. "Herein lies the hope of a peaceful Balkan Peninsula during the period of the present war, provided the Great Powers do not extend their operations in this direction, but it leaves, of course, the problem of a stormy period of adjustment in the final settlement."

The Legation states that Italy is intangibly but surely gaining a new standing in the Balkans.

Eu:RDC:EJD

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 1225. Bucharest, February 9, 1940.

Subject: The Balkan Entente Conference at Belgrade as Viewed from Bucharest.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
MAR 20 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
MAR 29 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-MC
MAR 29 1940
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

770.00/791

GRR
APR 18 1940

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that the Conference of the Permanent Council of the Balkan Entente held in Belgrade on February 2nd to 4th last was followed with great interest in Bucharest and that the general opinion among most observers here seems to be that, while there were no surprises nor sensations, nor even any very substantial accomplishments, the meeting was considered satisfactory in all quarters immediately concerned in that it achieved all that the sober-minded had expected without developing any untoward complications.

Foreign

Foreign Minister Gafencu, who presided at the meeting, returned to Bucharest on the evening of February 5th, and on February 7th Mr. Hibbard had an interview with Mr. Alexandre Cretziano, who, as Secretary General and Director of the Political Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ranked second in the Rumanian Delegation to the Conference. The results of this conversation were given in the Legation's telegram No. 25 of February 8, 4 p.m. Since this telegram contained the essence of the Rumanian view of the meeting and the Department will already have had a full accounting thereof from the Mission at Belgrade, this despatch will limit itself mainly to the reaction in the Rumanian press and to general comment.

The main theme in the press has been, of course, that this last Conference of the Balkan Entente, held at an especially critical moment, reaffirms once more the unity and solidarity, the community of views and interests, the policy of peace and neutrality, plus a present determination to block the spread of war to this area, of the four member States. Many commentators remark that Rumania and the other Balkan countries are not menaced by any immediate danger, stressing the desire to maintain peace and indicating the conviction that the interests of all the great powers, belligerent and non-belligerent alike, would be illy served by an extension of the war to the Balkan peninsula. There are many friendly words for Italy in appreciation of that country's interests in the Danubian-Balkan sphere and

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in recognitiom of the similarity of that country's attitude and policy at the present juncture to the attitude and policy of the Entente States. Almost all writers fall back on the official communiqué as portraying fully and clearly the significance of the Conference and not a few point to the seven-year renewal of the Pact as an assurance of its virility and importance. The official organ of the National Renaissance Front, Rumania's only legal political party, said much of Rumanian policy in one sentence (ROMANIA, February 6, 1940):

> "The States of the Balkan Entente know of no other attitude toward their neighbors than a friendly and pacific collaboration, and toward the Great Powers at war a loyal and complete neutrality."

Rather comprehensive extracts from the local press
1/ on the subject of the Conference are enclosed herewith, in translation. I am also enclosing, as a matter of
2/ record, a translation of the official communiqué issued at the close of the Conference, as well as of the more
3/ significant passages of Mr. Gafencu's speech given on the occasion of the banquet offered by the Yugoslav Minister of Foreign Affairs.

I sense a definite atmosphere of relief in Bucharest since the Conference. The fear of war in this area seems less acute. It has brought new hope. But of still greater interest to me is the evidence of a new dispositiom on the part of Rumania as regards her two hungry revisionist neighbors to the North and the South, Hungary and, more particularly, Bulgaria. The Legation's

telegram already cited quoted the Secretary General of the Rumanian Foreign Office as saying that this country's desire for better relations with Bulgaria and Hungary did not now go so far as to "envisage territorial concessions, which were impossible due to the uncertainty of the future situation, but that once peace had been obtained the question would be discussed". CURENTUL (February 8, 1940) writes:

> "There can be no question of giving satisfaction to absurd claims or to pretentions inspired by pride. But if, one day, in a better Europe, such a spirit of concession were to be possible between States, it could only be between friendly States. It is only between States which are friendly and which have given proof of their solidarity with the interests of the region to which they belong that there can be any question of improved relations. Friendly States can make reciprocal concessions. Enemies, never....."

And the TIMPUL (February 7, 1940) also says:

> "The four Ministers sought....to keep the Southeastern European sector out of the war of destruction....inspired by a spirit of conciliation, they examined the possibility of normalizing relations with Hungary and Bulgaria....."

Never before in recent years has the word "conciliation" appeared so often in official utterings or the press in Rumania, and never has there been less emphasis on the "existing frontiers". I find this significant. If the idea of a post-war adjustment is creeping into the local press and is even hinted in official quarters, not to mention the gratified references to the recent visits of Foreign Minister Sarajoglu and his Secretary General (Menemenjoglu) with Bulgarian Premier Kioseivanov, it

can only mean a new ray of hope is breaking through the hitherto entirely black clouds of Bulgarian-Rumanian relations, even possibly a tacit understanding that present forbearance will merit an honest attempt at settlement of differences in conjunction with the "new peace". Actually, if Bulgaria has fallen into this attitude, the raison d'être of the Balkan Entente ceases in many respects to exist and the idea of a "regional bloc", which Gafencu hopefully mentions, becomes a near-reality. Hungary, influenced by Italy and Yugoslavia, might well be included. Herein lies the hope of a peaceful Balkan Peninsula during the period of the present war, provided the Great Powers do not extend their operations in this direction, but it leaves, of course, the problem of a stormy period of adjustment in the final settlement.

I have already mentioned the friendly references to Italy in local press comment. That Italy is intangibly but surely gaining a new standing in the Balkans is undoubted. I shall restrict my present emphasis on this point to the following quotations from the speeches delivered at the Belgrade banquet on February 3rd:

Foreign Minister Markovici

> "Italy also merits our entire recognition for her precious contribution to the maintenance of peace in Southeastern Europe by the prudent attitude of 'non-belligerence' which she took at the opening of hostilities."

Foreign Minister Gafencu

> "Is it really necessary to add that our Entente, which pursues its own aims and does not submit to any foreign current, has proved abundantly that it is not directed against

anyone

anyone and that it is glad to have any sign of understanding that is shown to it?

"That is why we appreciate very much the political and moral value of Italy, who comes to greet our aspirations of peace, order and security, stressing in this manner the importance of the interests which bind her to us."

Before signing, I wish to record also the following communiqué, which appeared in the press on February 8th:

"Aside from brief messages given out in his capacity of President en exercice of the Balkan Entente to telegraphic agencies, Mr. Grigore Gafencu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, accorded no interviews during the Belgrade Conference.

"The interviews which were attributed to him by certain newspapers were not authorized."

And, finally, to quote the telegram by which Mr. Gafencu passed to Turkish Foreign Minister Sarajoglu, for the coming year, the Presidency of the Permanent Council of the Balkan Entente:

"With the greatest satisfaction I have the honor to announce that, in conformity with the Statute of the Balkan Entente, Your Excellency is called, beginning February 9, to the Presidency of its Permanent Council.

"In offering you my warmest congratulations and sincerest wishes for the complete success of the task of Your Excellency, I wish at the same time to express my warm conviction that the profound attachment of Your Excellency to the great pacific task we are pursuing in common and in which we are continually consecrating our efforts will furnish a new incentive to the activity of the Balkan Entente, so fruitful in happy results up to the present.

"I am convinced that under the enlightened

direction

direction of Your Excellency the beneficent influence of the Balkam Entente will continue to develop.

Respectfully yours,

Franklin Mott Gunther

Franklin Mott Gunther.

Enclosures:

1- Extracts from the press.

2- Translation of communiqué.

3- Extracts from speech of Foreign Minister Gafencu.

710.
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CKH:EMS.

Copies to Ankara, Belgrade, Athens.

Enclosure No. 1 to Despatch No. 1235
of February 9, 1940 from the
American Legation, Bucharest

RUMANIAN PRESS COMMENT ON BALKAN CONFERENCE AT BELGRADE FEBRUARY 2-4, 1940

CURENTUL (Nationalistic, anti-Semitic), February 6.

The conclusions of the Conference must be sought in the discreet but all-inclusive terms of the communiqué....

It is important to note that the decision taken by the Balkan Entente to maintain peace also completely engages Turkey. This fact eliminates every intrigue and every calumny invented recently with regard to Turkey.

The exposé of Saracioglu has produced the best impression here and has had the effect of removing every misunderstanding which might arise on account of the very special position adopted by Turkey.

The communiqué contains, however, elements of satisfaction for each of the belligerents. None of the countries engaged in the present war can complain of what was done at Belgrade.

The countries of the Balkan Entente---and Rumania particularly---will seek to continue the policy up to the present of peaceful commercial exchange, without prejudice to any of the countries with which they have commercial and economic engagements. The activity of the Balkan States therefore will continue as in the past, an activity of peace.

ROMANIA (Official organ of National Renaissance Front) February 6.

The objectives and the decisions taken at Belgrade are principles and decisions which permit of no equivocal interpretation and which, at the same time, dissipate and reduce to silence the rumors and evil insinuations of those who either were not aware of or refused to believe in the unshakeable solidarity of the four friendly powers grouped in the Balkan Entente.

The States of the Balkan Entente know of no other attitude toward their neighbors than of a friendly and pacific collaboration, and toward the Great Powers at war a loyal and complete neutrality.

The States of Central and Southeastern Europe have common interests which are complementary; they also find

themselves

themselves faced by the same difficulties and threats which---individually---constitute the same danger for each of them.

There is an identic truth in the declarations of the four Ministers for Foreign Affairs: the Balkan Entente is a decisive factor of peace for all the States and Nations in this region of Europe, which demands of them collaboration and solidarity.

UNIVERSUL (Nationalistic, anti-Semitic), February 6.

If the Session which has just closed has brought nothing sensational, it has however incontestably served the cause of peace in this part of Europe.

On the other hand, in the conversations which I have had here, I gathered the impression that, in general, in diplomatic circles, each one found, from his point of view, reasons for being satisfied with the consolidation of peace in this region.

The suspicions of some and fears of others, the false interpretations which had no serious foundation, will therefore be able to disappear in the face of the firmly determined will of the four powers to keep this region out of war and to oppose energetically any attempt to spill blood in this European region.

Besides, the extension of the Balkan Pact for another seven statutory years proves that the four powers are aware of their high political mission and their regional and European role in these tragic times as well as in the future.

TIMPUL (owned by Grégoire Gafencu, now Minister for Foreign Affairs), February 6.

The 8th Session of the Balkan Entente has been concluded in an atmosphere and under conditions which confirm in entirety our optimistic predictions.

Nothing can more exactly express the clear and precise accord at Belgrade than the seven points of the communiqué.....

In the communiqué and the speeches of Saturday night are all the public documents which express the strong affirmation of unity in thought and action which has again been noted, and more strongly, among the members of the Balkan Entente. All of the four representatives have together solemnly affirmed their community of views....

SEMNALUL

SEMNALUL (democratic), February 6.

The development of the conversations among the four Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Balkan Entente, the atmosphere of reciprocal confidence and cordiality which characterized the eighth reunion of the Permanent Council, as well as the terms of the final communiqué, show categorically how much the amateurs of sensation have deceived themselves....

The final communiqué synthetizes without possibility of denial the political position of the interested states in relation to all the European powers and to the neighbors of the Balkan Entente States: a clearly pacific, comprehensive, yet firm, position....

The very important passage in the communiqué regarding the "sincere desire of the Balkan Entente to entertain and develop friendly relations with the neighboring states in a conciliatory spirit and one of mutual understanding and peaceful collaboration" must find a suitable echo in the right quarters. It shows with every sincerity the thoughts of the four states toward their neighbors. If these thoughts are understood in their very friendly spirit, a new era will really begin for all the states of this sector of Southeastern Europe....

If there ever existed doubts in certain uninformed circles as to the success of the Conference they have been completely dissipated. If there were some who had hoped the end of the Balkan Entente, they deceived themselves completely: the Entente is vitally alive and can in this manner beautifully fulfill her regional and European mission.

TIMPUL, February 7.

These documents, and especially the communiqué which comprises in essence the opinions expressed by our Minister for Foreign Affairs in his speech Saturday night, give full satisfaction to the natural interests of the four States and, from the Rumanian point of view, may be considered with the greatest satisfaction.

The Balkan Conference at Belgrade has made a very important contribution to the strengthening of the unity and the solidarity of the Balkan Entente.

The four Ministers sought.....to keep the sector of Southeastern Europe out of the war of destruction..... inspired by a spirit of conciliation, they examined the possibility of normalizing relations with Hungary and Bulgaria.....this spirit of conciliation cannot exceed the bounds of national interests and rights, nor can it weaken, in any case, the existence and the possibility of resistence of our countries.

The conversations of the Ministers permitted a detailed

examination

examination of the entire political horizon. The conclusion was that the peace of this region is not threatened by any immediate danger..... Italy's positive attitude also contributes in an important degree to the preservation of peace and order....

These essential ideas were evidently strengthened at Belgrade and we are happy that Rumania was able to bring to the Conference a specially important contribution and that she found in her Yugoslav, Greek and Turkish allies a complete community of thought and action.

Rarely can a diplomatic reunion conclude with more satisfactory results.

Their influence on the future development of things will certainly be decisive and will help us in the progress of our peaceful task.

LE MOMENT (democratic, French-language daily), Feb. 7.

There were some two hundred foreign journalists at Belgrade. The impression of the majority of them is that the new point, the step forward achieved by the Balkan Entente, is that of having prepared an atmosphere propitious to a broader entente, to a rapprochement with the neighboring States which are not a part of the group of four.

CURENTUL, February 7.

What is of great political importance is the harmony which is observed in the accord established at Belgrade and in the policy of Italy. Had the communiqué at Belgrade been inspired by Duce Mussolini it could not have been much different in form, and least of all in contents.

Besides, in none of the declarations was there absent recognition of Italy's attitude, which has a decisive influence over the present situation in Southeastern Europe. But the moral and political attitude of Italy will be especially evident after the war. It is true that in the last four months Italy's role has increased enormously and it will be further increased in the near future. Even the most stubborn are being converted and the most shortsighted are discovering Rome. Better late than never.

The interests of Rumania in her foreign policy will be further geared with those of Italy after the war, when the Balkan Peninsula will register the active and conciliatory presence of Italy.

UNIVERSUL

UNIVERSUL, Feb. 7.

The preoccupation over a regional solution which might extend also to other states the objective of the Balkan solidarity is clearly revealed from the debates of the meeting at Belgrade. For the moment there is only an indication of the problem: a situation is noted, a hope or a conviction is expressed, an atmosphere of collaboration is sought to be created, and a tie between the Balkan and the Danubian peace is established.

L'INDEPENDANCE ROUMAINE (formerly official organ of National Liberal Party), Feb. 7.

Awaited with impatience and curiosity by the amateurs of the sensational, the Belgrade Conference has brought all that could normally have been expected of it, that is to say, a consolidation of peace in the Balkans.

It could not have had any other result. We said so before the reunion, as we knew the spirit of wise prudence which animates the (emerited) diplomats who compose the Council of the Balkan Entente.

In stormy times a good navigator never ventures into unknown latitudes. He seeks only to maintain and follow a good route and awaits fair weather for new enterprises.

It is an attitude of prudence and of conservation which the four Foreign Ministers adopted at Belgrade. They decided to maintain the Entente on a basis of solidarity and of peace, leaving to a more tranquil future the task of seeking the solution of more arduous problems.

Enclosure No. 2 to Despatch No. 1225
of Feb. 9, 1940 from the
American Legation, Bucharest.

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT CLOSE OF BALKAN ENTENTE CONFERENCE
AT BELGRADE, FEBRUARY 2 to 4, 1940
(Translated from TIMPUL, February 6, 1940)

The Permanent Council of the Balkan Entente met at Belgrade on February 2, 3, and 4, 1940, Greece being represented by Mr. I. Metaxas, President of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Rumania by Mr. Grigore Gafencu, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Turkey by Mr. Sukru Saracioglu, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Yugoslavia by Mr. Al. Tzintzar Markovici, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The exchange of views among the members of the Permanent Council, which took place in an atmosphere of cordiality and confidence, permitted them to observe unanimously:

(1) The common interest of the four States to maintain peace, order and security in Southeast Europe.

(2) The firm decision to continue their determined pacific policy, maintaining strictly their positions in relatiom to the present conflict with a view to safeguarding this part of Europe from the trials of war.

(3) The will to remain united within the Entente, which pursues only its own aims and which is not directed against anyone, as well as to watch jointly over the safeguarding of the right of each to its independence and its national territory.

(4) Their sincere desire to entertain and develop friendly relations with neighbor states in a conciliatory spirit of mutual understanding and peaceful collaboration.

(5) The necessity of further tightening and completing economic ties and communications between the Balkan States, especially as regards the organization of commercial exchanges within the Entente.

(6) The extension of the Balkan Pact for a new statutory period of seven years beginning February 9, 1941.

(7) The decision of the four Ministers for Foreign Affairs to keep closely in touch with each other until the next ordinary session of the Permanent Council of the Balkan Entente, which will take place at Athens in February 1941.

Belgrade, February 4, 1940.

Enclosure No. 3 to Despatch No. 1225
of Feb. 9, 1940 from the
American Legation, Bucharest.

EXTRACTS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER GAFENCU'S SPEECH
AT BELGRADE ON FEBRUARY 3, 1940

(Translated from LE MOMENT of February 5, 1940)

.....Our entente thus takes on a new significance: we represent a region with its interests, its aspirations and the important task which falls to it.

Thence the mutual interest which we attach to the defense of our supreme possessions: our right to liberty, to unity and to national territory.

Thence also our resolutely pacific attitude, our aversion to all aggression and our desire to avoid in this region, so often devastated, further bloody struggles.

This will for peace we have affirmed clearly throughout the entire extent of our region from the Black Sea to the Adriatic, from the peaks of the Carpathians to the southern promontories of Greece, and we have the right to hope that a neutrality which bothers no one and which serves the general interests will be respected as loyally as we ourselves respect it....

The regional idea which guides us determines our relations among ourselves and our relations with our immediate neighbors.....

This entente has been reproached for being directed against certain neighboring states. It is so little directed against them that, given its regional character, its significance and its aims, it embraces them from the beginning. Also we are happy whenever our neighbors demonstrate to us their comprehension of this connection. You have justly mentioned, Mr. Minister, our common desire to establish confident relations with Bulgaria.

I wish to add that we have all appreciated certain words of the head of the Bulgarian Government which indicates its will to respect the commandments and the interests of the Balkan community. Such words bring us closer to the day of peace and strengthens us in our conviction that on the enlarged basis of an entente such as ours all relations among neighbors can be settled in a friendly fashion.

You likwise made allusion, Mr. Minister, to our relations with Hungary. Danubian peace comes close to being Balkan peace and you judge correctly that the policy of conciliation and rapprochement, which already

groups

groups four countries in the Balkans, is bound to have still other happy results. Likewise, you have not hidden the interest which you attach to the development of confident relations with Hungary. You know that we have always been in full accord and closely united on this subject.

Conscious of the value of words and of the gravity of the times, I shall limit myself to expressing my profound conviction that as regards the Danubian problem, as in the case of the Balkan problem, it is possible to find on the basis of a regional entente appropriate formulas for the conciliation of closely intermixed races and for a friendly drawing together of the neighboring states.

That seems to me all the more possible since the common history of these peoples, who have sown under their feet numerous resentments, has also created among them innumerable ties of interests, of relationships, of sympathy and brings to them more and more clearly a common and solidary task.

Is it necessary to add that our Entente, which pursues only its own ends and submits itself to no outside influence, has largely proved that it is not directed against anyone and that it is sensitive to all indications of understanding which are manifested toward it.

That is why we greatly appreciate the political and moral value of the friendly attitude of Italy, which is in accord with our aspirations for peace, order and security, thus emphasizing the importance of the interests which tie her to us.....

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 27 Angers, March 1, 1940

Subject: Italy's reaction to Balkan conference.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL FOR THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY

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UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE
MAR 27 1940
MR. WELLES

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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APR 1 1940

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

As of possible interest to the Department, I have the honor to transmit herewith a memorandum of my conversation of this morning with Minister Zaleski, on Italy's reaction to the Balkan conference.

Respectfully yours,
A.J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.
A.J.Drexel Biddle,Jr.

Enclosure:
Memorandum as stated.

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Enclosure No. 1 to despatch No. 27, March 1, 1940 from the Embassy, Angers, France, on subject of : Italy's reaction to Balkan conference.

MEMORANDUM

While Italy's preliminary reaction immediately subsequent to the Balkan conference was marked by a certain degree of satisfaction, this later changed to one of disappointment when it was ascertained in Rome that Turkey had been the predominant influence in the conference. This sense of disappointment was made the more acute when Turkey's attitude was traced to British and French influence.

The foregoing in the opinion of Minister Zaleski may be marked down as a factor importantly contributing towards the friction currently underlying Italo-Turkish relations.

Minister Zaleski went on to say that another of his cabled reports indicated an early visit on the part of King Carol of Rumania to Rome. This visit the report held undoubtedly had a bearing upon Rome's vigorous efforts to foster an improvement in Rumanian-Hungarian relations and in connection therewith Rome's reported attempts to influence Rumania to make concessions to Hungary.

Judging however, from his reports of today and yesterday from Balkan capitals, Minister Zaleski doubted that Rumania would concede in anything.

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 1363 Ankara, February 14, 1940.

Subject: Turkish Reaction to Belgrade Meeting of Permanent Council of Balkan Entente.

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DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
MAR 30 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

Supplementing my telegraphic report, I have the honor to inform the Department that Turkish opinion, both official and unofficial, appears to be quite satisfied with the results of the Belgrade Conference. As a matter of fact, Turkey did not expect a great deal from the Conference. The Minister for Foreign Affairs on leaving Istanbul for Belgrade expressed to the press his conviction that Balkan solidarity would be strengthened

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strengthened " a little more" as a result of the meeting. The Turkish press pointed out that in view of the efforts made by certain Powers to create difficulties among the members of the Balkan Entente, the mere fact of the convening of the Conference could be considered as a success for the Entente. While the press was not hesitant in setting forth the policies which it thought that the Balkan States should pursue, it cherished no illusions as to the probable accomplishments of the Conference. In its opinion there was no question but that all the Balkan States desired the preservation of peace in the Balkans and were determined to maintain their independence, but they lacked the courage to take the measures which were necessary under present circumstances to ensure these objectives.

It is of interest to note that for some time prior to the Conference the Turkish press in discussing developments in the Balkans had been emphasizing that the Balkan peoples should learn from recent events and relegate to the background the differences existing among them until the external dangers menacing them had disappeared. If the differences could not be settled at once, a definitive solution should be postponed until the termination of the war. The sacrifices which they might make in this respect would be little compared with the sacrifices they would make in the event of the Balkans becoming involved in war. The maintenance of the independence of the Balkan States should be considered superior to the settlement of any disagreements among them. A failure on the part of the Balkan States to consider in advance the measures necessary to meet the eventuality of external aggression was liable to cost

them

them their independence. The Balkan Entente, declared Falih Rifki Atay in the ULUS of January 28, 1940, had rendered a great service to the Balkans by establishing security in the Balkan region, but it was now confronted with the problem of protecting the liberty of the Balkan peoples from attack from outside the Balkans. Nearly all writers dwelt on the necessity of a closer union of the Balkan States. The Balkan nations must unite to organize in common their defense against the dangers which menace them from abroad. So long as a defensive Balkan bloc has not been formed against external aggression, the countries of the Peninsula will remain exposed to the danger of an aggression on the part of the great Powers. In this connection it is worthy of note that the Turkish press has little confidence in Italy's aims or policies. While it is recognized that the attitude of Italy at the present time contributes to the maintenance of peace, her present policy is considered to be one of expediency forced on her by recent developments, such as the Treaty of Ankara. If Italy desired to see a single front constituted in the Balkans it was not because she desired that the independence and the integrity of the Balkan countries should be maintained, but because she feared that another Power might establish herself in the Balkans before she did.

In appraising the results of the Conference, the Turkish press was unanimous in holding that the Balkan Entente had come out of the meeting strengthened. The intrigues carried on by hostile Powers against the Entente had yielded no results. In this connection the prolongation of the Balkan pact for a new period of seven years was considered to be of significance. The second paragraph* of the official

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*The second paragraph refers to the firm decision of the members of the Balkan Entente "to continue their resolutely peaceful policy by maintaining strictly their positions in regard to the present conflict with a view to keeping this part of Europe safe from the affliction of war."

official communiqué was cited as proof of the failure of the efforts of certain States with ambitions in the Balkans to discredit Turkey with her Balkan Allies. These States had maintained that the Turkish pact with France and Great Britain was contrary to the spirit of the Balkan Entente; that Turkey had thereby abandoned her policy of neutrality, and that she had no right to participate in conferences of the neutral Balkan Powers; and rumors were spread abroad that the Balkan allies of Turkey were dissatisfied with her attitude. The paragraph in question now made it clear that the Balkan States approved the position taken by Turkey. Finally, it was emphasized that the effort to disrupt the Balkan Entente by establishing a new group, distinct from the Balkan Entente, to which countries of the Danube Basin would adhere, had also failed. Considerable praise was bestowed on the conciliatory attitude of Bulgaria. The Bulgarian Prime Minister was considered to be pursuing a loyal and friendly policy. Bulgaria perceived that her true interests lie in the maintenance and preservation of peace in the Balkans. The guarantees of neutrality given by Bulgaria had rendered a great service to the peace of the Balkans. Some writers saw in the rapprochement between Bulgaria and the members of the Balkan Entente one of the most important aspects of the Conference. A few writers considered that, while no steps had been taken to form a common front against external aggression, the Turkish thesis had gained ground, namely, that all the Balkan States, including Bulgaria, should form a bloc with a view to maintaining security in the Peninsula and aiding each other against external aggression. The third paragraph* of the official communiqué, although

*The third paragraph refers to the will of the members of the Balkan Entente "to remain united in the bosom of an entente which is pursuing only its own aims and is not directed against anyone, and to watch over in common the protection of the right of each one of them to independence and national territory."

although vague and weak, was looked upon as a timid step in the direction of the constitution of a Balkan bloc of defense against aggression from outside the Balkans.

The only official statement made to date with reference to the Belgrade Conference was one made to the press in Istanbul on February 2, 1940, by the Minister for Foreign Affairs upon his return to Turkey. Mr. Saracoglu emphasized the following points relating to the Conference:

> "a. The loyal, clear and sincere policy pursued by Turkey has been appreciated by the whole Balkans, allies or non-allies.
>
> "b. Our activity and our attitude during the meeting at Belgrade have been appreciated by the public opinion of the world.
>
> "c. Everyone is convinced that each Balkan State, whether it forms a part of the alliance or not, with a view to saving the Balkan countries from the scourge of war, and even with a view to the realization of a policy of Balkanism, pursues a policy parallel and even completely identical with that of its neighbors.
>
> "d. We are convinced that henceforth the dispute among the Balkan countries will be settled as disputes among the members of a family.
>
> "e. Everyone finds that the feeling of solidarity among the guardians of Balkan peace is strong enough to prevent the flames of war from penetrating into this region."

In concluding it may be stated that the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, in accordance with the statutes of the Balkan Entente, assumed the Presidency of the Permanent Council of the Entente on February 9, 1940.

Respectfully yours,

J. V. A. MacMURRAY

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LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 883. Belgrade, February 17, 1940

Subject: Balkan Entente Meeting.

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MAR 26 1940
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF STATE
MAR 20 1940

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The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

With reference to my telegram of February 12, 5 P.M., No. 47, I have the honor to report the following conversation with Dr. Cincar-Marković, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, at the time of my interview with him on the morning of February 12, 1940. The first part of my conversation with the Foreign Minister has been reported separately in Despatch No. 879 of February 15, 1940, entitled "Consultation with the Yugoslav Government with regard to the bases for the foundation of a lasting peace". The latter part of the conversation concerned the Balkan Entente conference in retrospect and follows below:

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I mentioned that I had not seen the Minister since the Balkan Entente meeting took place. I wished to express my gratitude to him for having given me in advance accurate information which I could send to my government regarding what the conference could accomplish. He said that as he had told me, the conference produced nothing sensational but that it had served to emphasize three desiderata on which all four powers were agreed: (1) peace in the Balkans; (2) neutrality of the Balkan Entente in the present European conflict, and (3) improvement of relations with Bulgaria.

With regard to relations with Hungary, I said that I had had the impression that Hungary was one power that was dissatisfied with the results of the Entente. It had felt, furthermore, that Italy should have pressed Hungarian claims instead of espousing the cause of the Balkan Entente. The Minister said that the Yugoslav Government had done everything possible to calm the Hungarians, but he found it very difficult to talk constructively with them as they apparently did not know what they wish. He said that in recent talks he has had with the Hungarian Minister, Baron Bessenyey, the latter would not state specifically what Hungarian territorial aspirations are.

The relations between Bulgaria and the Balkan Entente were greatly improved by the conference according to the Minister. He said that Mr. Saracoglu, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, had had two important talks with Mr. Kiosseivanov, the Bulgarian Prime Minister, one on going to Belgrade and the other on returning, and that the Bulgarians have agreed now to put off to the end of

the

the war any request for territorial revision. The opening of a Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce in Belgrade, as well as of a Yugoslav Chamber at Sofia showed that Bulgaria and Yugoslavia are developing important economic relations. As a matter of fact it had been decided at the Balkan Entente Conference to invite Bulgaria to attend the Permanent Economic Council of the Balkan Entente which will be held in April or May.

Dr. Cincar-Marković said that he had had numerous talks with Mr. Gafencu, the Rumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, recently regarding dissatisfaction with Hungarian and Bulgarian claims. There are several reasons why Rumania can do nothing at the present moment. First, any territorial concessions made at the present time would weaken Rumania in the face of possible Soviet aggression. Secondly, any concessions now made to Hungary or to Bulgaria would be made the immediate basis for claims for compensation by the other. As he had previously told me, Bulgaria is reasonable about the matter and left off discussions until the close of the war. Hungary has been told by Italy to put off her territorial claims but is not accepting as willingly as did Bulgaria.

I said that I was very much interested in the report that relations between Italy and Turkey are improving, as I thought this to be one of the keys to the situation. The Minister said that there is indeed an improvement, especially since the Balkan Entente meeting at which the appreciation of the Entente, including Turkey, was voiced regarding Italy's efforts to maintain

peace

peace in the Balkans. Economic conversations in Rome will also be of assistance in this regard. He expressed agreement with my point of view that Italy and Turkey are drawn together by their common desire to thwart Soviet penetration into the Balkans.

Respectfully yours,

Arthur Bliss Lane

File No. 710.

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LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 2024. Budapest, February 15, 1940.

SUBJECT: Balkan Conference.

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ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MAR 27 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF STATE
MAR 25 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

With reference to my despatch No. ~~2102~~ of February 7, 1940, on the above subject, and in amplification of my telegram No. 40 of February 13, 1940,

1/ I have the honor to transmit herewith a translation,

2/ together with a summary, of the second editorial which appeared in PESTER LLOYD and which was mentioned in paragraph three of the telegram.

Parenthetically, the Foreign Minister told me that he

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that he had written this second editorial. The "cards" meant by him in the remark appearing in the penultimate paragraph, concerning "cards in its (the Hungarian Government's) possession which would have impressed weightily the authors of the Belgrade declaration", he said, were (1) the suggestion of the negotiation of a pact guaranteeing the Hungarian-Russian frontier, made by Molotov to the Hungarian Minister at Moscow; (2) the Hungarian-Italian understanding of mutual assistance; (3) Italy's promise to Hungary not to guarantee Rumania's borders without prior Hungarian approval; and (4) German assurance to Hungary that she had not guaranteed Rumania's frontiers.

The press continued to comment widely on the results of the Conference, in a vein similar to that indicated in the despatch under reference. It pointed out that the re-annexation of the Hungarian-populated region of Transylvania to the Crown of St. Stephen was the chief aim of Hungarian foreign policy, one whose achievement was necessary for ethnic and historic reasons and for the general good of Europe. However, the Hungarian Government had indicated that it considered the Balkan Bloc only as a continuation of the Little Entente, as a force opposing the interests of Hungary.

Respectfully yours,

John F. Montgomery.

List of

List of Enclosures:

No. 1. Translation of editorial from PESTER LLOYD of February 10, 1940.

No. 2.. Summary of translation of above-mentioned editorial.

File No. 710

In Quintuplicate to the Department.

Enclosure 1 to Despatch No. 2024
of February 15, 1940 from the
American Legation at Budapest

TRANSLATION OF EDITORIAL OF
FOREIGN OFFICE ORIGIN ENTITLED,
"PURE REASON'S CRITICISM"

(PESTER LLOYD of February 10, 1940).

"The Balkan Entente, such as it appears after the Belgrade Conference which, one nearly feels inclined to say, was too much of a success, reminds in its fateful basic features very much of the Little Entente of none too blessed memory. It sports, however, an even far more dangerous form, because it proposes to effect this change of structure at a time when a European war is on. What was in the nature of a powder-barrel, and the most threatening for its members in case of the Little Entente, actually was the circumstance that the extremely unstable fortunes of Czechoslovakia were to drag the whole structure into war. In the same way the most alarming point in the newly-molded Balkan Entente appears to be the circumstances of one or the other of its members being on a slanting plane on which the whole, so far loose, structure might or should slide into war. We cannot conceal the fact that this is disagreeable, even painful to us Hungarians because we do wish to safeguard peace and mean to stick to this determination: our political judgment, however, does not leave us any doubts as to the fact that if Rumania, for example, or another Balkan State, would be drawn into the war, inevitably the whole Balkan peninsula, and even the Carpathian basin, would burst into flames.

"There once already was a Balkan State which, last year, succeeded, by threatening a radical change of policy, to obtain assurances of aid from certain Great Powers; it may now hope to be able to continue this game - but it should not forget that the maintenance of the present state of peace was the only hope for a State in a situation exposed to danger for continuing to exist.

"A few days ago, in these columns, we expounded with passionless thoroughness why we considered the so-highly praised results of the Belgrade Conference to be provocation and for this reason had to condemn it. We cannot help being obliged to consider the term "veiller en commun" - safeguard in common - hatched with subtlety and, as stated, hitting beyond the mark, of the third paragraph of the notorious final communiqué, as the first, and by no means so very uncertain step, on the road leading to mutual aid. This diplomatic

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and judicial fact cannot be palliated nor disposed of by denial either, since also at the time of the late Take Jonescu - one of the fathers of the Little Entente - it was emphasized that there was no question of any mutual aid and it was endeavored to make the whole affair appear as a mere trifle, and still the three States of this 'peaceful bloc' eventually arrived at a military alliance - directed against Hungary. In a military alliance, one should well note which for twenty years had precluded the establishment of a normal state of peace and mutual confidence in the Danube basin, and this perfectly failing in its object because eventually it sadly failed at the very moment when it should have stood the test.

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(PESTER LLOYD of February 10, 1940).

The Balkan Bloc Conference indicated that the Bloc had assumed the characteristics of the Little Entente. The unstable fortunes of Czechoslovakia almost brought the latter to war; the unstable structures of one of the Balkan Bloc States might bring this Entente, in view of its changed structure, to war.

Rumania might continue to exact assurances from Great Powers through threats, but peace was the only atmosphere in which that State could continue to exist.

The words "veiller en commun", in the third paragraph of the communiqué issued at the end of the Conference, indicated a trend towards mutual aid - a policy which brought about a military alliance of the Little Entente, which precluded the establishing of normal peace in the Danube basin, and which failed when it should have stood the test.

The aims of the Balkan Union seemed mysterious, particularly in their military connotations. The situation of the Hungarian Government was made more difficult when its public became aware of the possibility of the existence of a military alliance directed against Hungary and Bulgaria. In recent utterances, the Rumanian Foreign Minister seemed to have confirmed Hungarian suspicions.

Hungary had abstained from any action prior to the convening of the conference which might have been regarded as provocative - even to refraining from publishing a communiqué after the Foreign Minister's recent exposé before the Committees for Foreign Relations of the Parliament, though such silence exposed the Government to public criticism. In the hope that her action would be appreciated by the Conference Members, Hungary remained silent when she could have presented facts which would have impressed the authors of the Conference communiqué.

Hungary, continuing her policy of peace, noted the action of the Balkan Bloc and determined that sacrifices were useless if they were regarded as signs of weakness. It was a mistake to believe that the Hungaro-Rumanian problem could be solved by the wording of a document - the question could be suppressed or annihilated by violence if raised in such form, but not by silence.

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SUBJECT: Balkan Conference.

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"There once already was a Balkan State which, last year, succeeded, by threatening a radical change of policy, to obtain assurances of aid from certain Great Powers; it may now hope to be able to continue this game - but it should not forget that the maintenance of the present state of peace was the only hope for a State in a situation exposed to danger for continuing to exist.

"A few days ago, in these columns, we expounded with passionless thoroughness why we considered the so-highly praised results of the Belgrade Conference to be provocation and for this reason had to condemn it. We cannot help being obliged to consider the term "veiller en commun" - safeguard in common - hatched with subtlety and, as stated, hitting beyond the mark, of the third paragraph of the notorious final communiqué, as the first, and by no means so very uncertain step, on the road leading to mutual aid. This diplomatic

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"As one knows, the Hungarian official and non-official organs, previous to the Balkan Conference, refrained from any action which, with justification, might have led to a threatening or provoking attitude, respectively, to any such measure. The Government went so far that, contrary to the usage of twenty years, no communiqués were published even of the last sessions of the committees for foreign relations of the two Houses of Parliament, lest Rumania have a possibility artificially to deduce from a communiqué something she might consider to be directed against herself. Though Rumania could hardly have expected to hear her praise sung in such Hungarian official communiqué, if we had enumerated our however-justified complaints, Bucharest would have considered this "an aggressive attitude". If we would have passed on without any mention of Rumania, there would have been the objection why we had not mentioned her the way we usually make friendly mention of Yugoslavia? The Hungarian Government fully realized that by its silence it exposed itself to criticism within the country, but it accepted such burden with the hope that among the many gestures it had made, the Balkan Conference would appreciate also this attitude it was taking. It assumed this burden at a moment when it may have shown cards in its possession which undoubtedly would have impressed weightily the authors of the Belgrade declaration.

"Hungary, as repeatedly and categorically emphasized by the Foreign Minister, is bearing in mind before anything else, her being European and she will not change in future either the peace policy so far pursued. She remembers, however, what happened, and takes note of the fact that it is not worth while to make sacrifices if such are being interpreted as signs of weakness by the opposite party: the Hungarian Government does draw all the conclusions from this notion. Finally, if anybody were to believe that the Hungaro-Rumanian problem can be solved by some communiqué, a declaration, or minority statutes (or whatever any such instrument were to be named), he is mistaken. If a question is once raised in such form, it can perhaps be suppressed or annihilated by violence, but it can no longer be killed by not talking about it."

Enclosure 2 to Despatch No. 2024
of February 15, 1940 from the
American Legation at Budapest.

SUMMARY OF TRANSLATION OF EDITORIAL OF FOREIGN OFFICE ORIGIN ENTITLED, "PURE REASON'S CRITICISM"

(PESTER LLOYD of February 10, 1940).

The Balkan Bloc Conference indicated that the Bloc had assumed the characteristics of the Little Entente. The unstable fortunes of Czechoslovakia almost brought the latter to war; the unstable structures of one of the Balkan Bloc States might bring this Entente, in view of its changed structure, to war.

Rumania might continue to exact assurances from Great Powers through threats, but peace was the only atmosphere in which that State could continue to exist.

The words "veiller en commun", in the third paragraph of the communiqué issued at the end of the Conference, indicated a trend towards mutual aid - a policy which brought about a military alliance of the Little Entente, which precluded the establishing of normal peace in the Danube basin, and which failed when it should have stood the test.

The aims of the Balkan Union seemed mysterious, particularly in their military connotations. The situation of the Hungarian Government was made more difficult when its public became aware of the possibility of the existence of a military alliance directed against Hungary and Bulgaria. In recent utterances, the Rumanian Foreign Minister seemed to have confirmed Hungarian suspicions.

Hungary had abstained from any action prior to the convening of the conference which might have been regarded as provocative - even to refraining from publishing a communiqué after the Foreign Minister's recent exposé before the Committees for Foreign Relations of the Parliament, though such silence exposed the Government to public criticism. In the hope that her action would be appreciated by the Conference Members, Hungary remained silent when she could have presented facts which would have impressed the authors of the Conference communiqué.

Hungary, continuing her policy of peace, noted the action of the Balkan Bloc and determined that sacrifices were useless if they were regarded as signs of weakness. It was a mistake to believe that the Hungaro-Rumanian problem could be solved by the wording of a document - the question could be suppressed or annihilated by violence if raised in such form, but not by silence.

No. 2024. Budapest, February 15, 1940.

SUBJECT: Balkan Conference.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

With reference to my despatch No. 2102 of February 7, 1940, on the above subject, and in amplification of my telegram No. 40 of February 13, 1940,
1/ I have the honor to transmit herewith a translation,
2/ together with a summary, of the second editorial which appeared in PESTER LLOYD and which was mentioned in paragraph three of the telegram.

Parenthetically, the Foreign Minister told me

that he

that he had written this second editorial. The "cards" meant by him in the remark appearing in the penultimate paragraph, concerning "cards in its (the Hungarian Government's) possession which would have impressed weightily the authors of the Belgrade declaration", he said, were (1) the suggestion of the negotiation of a pact guaranteeing the Hungarian-Russian frontier, made by Molotov to the Hungarian Minister at Moscow; (2) the Hungarian-Italian understanding of mutual assistance; (3) Italy's promise to Hungary not to guarantee Rumania's borders without prior Hungarian approval; and (4) German assurance to Hungary that she had not guaranteed Rumania's frontiers.

The press continued to comment widely on the results of the Conference, in a vein similar to that indicated in the despatch under reference. It pointed out that the re-annexation of the Hungarian-populated region of Transylvania to the Crown of St. Stephen was the chief aim of Hungarian foreign policy, one whose achievement was necessary for ethnic and historic reasons and for the general good of Europe. However, the Hungarian Government had indicated that it considered the Balkan Bloc only as a continuation of the Little Entente, as a force opposing the interests of Hungary.

Respectfully yours,

John F. Montgomery.

List of

List of Enclosures:

No. 1. Translation of editorial from PESTER LLOYD of February 10, 1940.

No. 2.. Summary of translation of above-mentioned editorial.

File No. 710

In Quintuplicate to the Department.

Enclosure 1 to Despatch No. 2024
of February 15, 1940 from the
American Legation at Budapest

TRANSLATION OF EDITORIAL OF
FOREIGN OFFICE ORIGIN ENTITLED,
"[illegible]"

(PESTER LLOYD of February 10, 1940).

"The Balkan Entente, such as it appears after the Belgrade Conference which, one nearly feels inclined to say, was too much of a success, reminds in its fateful basic features very much of the Little Entente of none too blessed memory. It sports, however, an even far more dangerous form, because it proposes to effect this change of structure at a time when a European war is on. What was in the nature of a powder-barrel, and the most threatening for its members in case of the Little Entente, actually was the circumstance that the extremely unstable fortunes of Czechoslovakia were to drag the whole structure into war. In the same way the most alarming point in the newly-molded Balkan Entente appears to be the circumstances of one or the other of its members being on a slanting plane on which the whole, so far loose, structure might or should slide into war. We cannot conceal the fact that this is disagreeable, even painful to us Hungarians because we do wish to safeguard peace and mean to stick to this determination: our political judgment, however, does not leave us any doubts as to the fact that if Rumania, for example, or another Balkan State, would be drawn into the war, inevitably the whole Balkan peninsula, and even the Carpathian basin, would burst into flames.

"There once already was a Balkan State which, last year, succeeded, by threatening a radical change of policy, to obtain assurances of aid from certain Great Powers; it may now hope to be able to continue this game - but it should not forget that the maintenance of the present state of peace was the only hope for a State in a situation exposed to danger for continuing to exist.

"A few days ago, in these columns, we expounded with passionless thoroughness why we considered the so-highly praised results of the Belgrade Conference to be provocation and for this reason had to condemn it. We cannot help being obliged to consider the term "veiller en commun" - safeguard in common - hatched with subtlety and, as stated, hitting beyond the mark, of the third paragraph of the notorious final communiqué, as the first, and by no means so very uncertain step, on the road leading to mutual aid. This diplomatic

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and judicial fact cannot be palliated nor disposed of by denial either, since also at the time of the late Take Jonescu - one of the fathers of the Little Entente - it was emphasized that there was no question of any mutual aid and it was endeavored to make the whole affair appear as a mere trifle, and still the three States of this 'peaceful bloc' eventually arrived at a military alliance - directed against Hungary. In a military alliance, one should well note which for twenty years had precluded the establishment of a normal state of peace and mutual confidence in the Danube basin, and this perfectly failing in its object because eventually it sadly failed at the very moment when it should have stood the test.

The aims of the Balkan union seem mysterious to us. Namely, if in times of war there is an endeavor to draw relations tighter, such tendency cannot be disguised by alleging that the new structure solely would serve the purpose of defence. Such manner of interpretation is a failure particularly at a time when the notion of defence has become extremely elastic. The situation of the Hungarian Government gets the more difficult because it was deemed proper, above and beyond the provocation for which there had been no cause whatsoever, publicly to clinch such militant solidarity (there never was any doubt as to the attitude of these States in case of a war of aggression), and thereby unequivocally to state their conception aimed at the foundation of an actual bloc. The difficulties of the Hungarian Government are still further increased also by the fact that Rumania's attempt to bring about a military alliance directed against Hungary and Bulgaria, in excess of the military agreements so far existing among the individual States, became known to a considerable proportion of the Hungarian public. This is the very point where pure reason fails to understand, because it cannot find any explanation for the necessity of a military alliance, since the existing agreements among the individual States already fully equal the notion of a military alliance, and one must ask why the endeavor to carry home something so provokingly superfluous as a diplomatic success of the purest type! After that, hearing the Rumanian Foreign Minister, in contradiction to his own reassuring statements, say elsewhere that he was going to stand up by all and any means against rumors to the effect that Rumania at any time would be prepared to make territorial concessions to Hungary and Bulgaria, the situation is outlined even more clearly.

"As one knows, the Hungarian official and non-official organs, previous to the Balkan Conference, refrained from any action which, with justification, might have led to a threatening or provoking attitude, respectively, to any such measure. The Government went so far that, contrary to the usage of twenty years, no communiqués were published ever of the last sessions of the committees for foreign relations of the two Houses of Parliament, lest Rumania have a possibility artificially to deduce from a communiqué something she might consider to be directed against herself. Though Rumania could hardly have expected to hear her praise sung in such Hungarian official communiqué, if we had enumerated our however-justified complaints, Bucharest would have considered this "an aggressive attitude". If we would have passed on without any mention of Rumania, there would have been the objection why we had not mentioned her the way we usually make friendly mention of Yugoslavia. The Hungarian Government fully realized that by its silence it exposed itself to criticism within the country, but it accepted such burden with the hope that among the many gestures it had made, the Balkan Conference would appreciate also this attitude it was taking. It assumed this burden at a moment when it may have shown cards in its possession which undoubtedly would have impressed weightily the authors of the Belgrade declaration.

"Hungary, as repeatedly and categorically emphasized by the Foreign Minister, is bearing in mind before anything else, her being European and she will not change in future either the peace policy so far pursued. She remembers, however, what happened, and takes note of the fact that it is not worth while to make sacrifices if such are being interpreted as signs of weakness by the opposite party: the Hungarian Government does draw all the conclusions from this notion. Finally, if anybody were to believe that the Hungaro-Rumanian problem can be solved by some communiqué, a declaration, or minority statutes (or whatever any such instrument were to be named), he is mistaken. If a question is once raised in such form, it can perhaps be suppressed or annihilated by violence, but it can no longer be killed by not talking about it."

Enclosure 2 to Despatch No. 2024
of February 15, 1940 from the
American Legation at Budapest.

SUMMARY OF TRANSLATION OF EDITORIAL OF FOREIGN OFFICE ORGAN NEWSPAPER, "PESTER LLOYD'S CRITICISM"

(PESTER LLOYD of February 10, 1940).

The Balkan Bloc Conference indicated that the Bloc had assumed the characteristics of the Little Entente. The unstable fortunes of Czechoslovakia almost brought the latter to war; the unstable structures of one of the Balkan Bloc States might bring this Entente, in view of its changed structure, to war.

Rumania might continue to exact assurances from Great Powers through threats, but peace was the only atmosphere in which that State could continue to exist.

The words "veiller en commun", in the third paragraph of the communiqué issued at the end of the Conference, indicated a trend towards mutual aid - a policy which brought about a military alliance of the Little Entente, which precluded the establishing of normal peace in the Danube basin, and which failed when it should have stood the test.

The aims of the Balkan Union seemed mysterious, particularly in their military connotations. The situation of the Hungarian Government was made more difficult when its public became aware of the possibility of the existence of a military alliance directed against Hungary and Bulgaria. In recent utterances, the Rumanian Foreign Minister seemed to have confirmed Hungarian suspicions.

Hungary had abstained from any action prior to the convening of the conference which might have been regarded as provocative - even to refraining from publishing a communiqué after the Foreign Minister's recent exposé before the Committees for Foreign Relations of the Parliament, though such silence exposed the Government to public criticism. In the hope that her action would be appreciated by the Conference Members, Hungary remained silent when she could have presented facts which would have impressed the authors of the Conference communiqué.

Hungary, continuing her policy of peace, noted the action of the Balkan Bloc and determined that sacrifices were useless if they were regarded as signs of weakness. It was a mistake to believe that the Hungaro-Rumanian problem could be solved by the wording of a document - the question could be suppressed or annihilated by violence if raised in such form, but not by silence.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

March 25, 1940.

Summary of Despatch no. 419, from Legation at Sofia, dated February 15, 1940.

Subject: Conversation with Prime Minister Kiosseivanoff

Mr. Millard believes that M. Kiosseivanoff adroitly utilized the stop of the Turkish Foreign Minister in Sofia enroute to the Belgrade Conference to bring about a formal consideration of Bulgaria's claims on the Dobrudja. The Turks placed before the Conference the Bulgarian point of view, and M. Gafencu while giving the usual reply that Rumania could not consider the return of the Dobrudja at this time agreed that the Bulgarian claim, unlike the Russian and Hungarian claims, was "legitimate" and promised to "lay it before his Government".

Mr. Kiosseivanoff believed that the Germans had succeeded in causing the Russians to postpone any action against Bessarabia. It was to the German interests to maintain the Balkan peace in order to keep open the channels of supply; conversely it was to the Allied interests to disrupt these sources of supply. The Allied army

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in Syria was doubtless organized with that possible eventuality but the Bulgarian Prime Minister did not believe that the Allies could open an Eastern front without some plausible reason, such as the implementation of the Allied guaranty of Rumania. Mr. Millard asked whether the Prime Minister thought Turkey would really come to Rumania's assistance should Russia cross the River Pruth. Mr. Kiosseivanoff replied that he had asked this same question of the Turkish Foreign Minister to which the latter had replied that on the question of resistance the Rumanians changed their minds "every three days" and that it was impossible for him clearly to understand Rumanian policy.

Eu:RDC:EJD

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 419

Sofia, February 15, 1940.

Subject: Conversation with the Prime Minister regarding the meeting of the Balkan Entente.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
MAR 27 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

770.00/764

I have the honor to refer to my telegram No. 11, of February 13, 6 p.m. reporting a conversation with the Prime Minister on the Balkan Entente meeting and the visits to Sofia of the Turkish Foreign Minister en route to and from Belgrade, and to enclose a memorandum setting forth in detail the conversation.

APR 2 1940
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GRR

Respectfully yours,

Hugh Millard

Hugh Millard
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

Enclosure:
Memorandum of conversation

File 710
HM/MM

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Received

Enclosure to despatch No.
419, February 15, 1940, Sofia.

February 13, 1940.

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

between

the Prime Minister and Mr. Millard

I called on the Prime Minister this morning and asked him if he could tell me anything about the Balkan Entente meeting at Belgrade, especially if the deliberations had any significance for Bulgaria.

He said that the principal new development at Belgrade was reflected in paragraph 3 of the official communiqué, namely, the implication that the Balkan Entente countries should consult with one another if their external frontiers are menaced. While he did not think this would lead to anything very concrete, it was in a sense an extension of the sphere of the Entente, which had hitherto been exclusively aimed at Bulgaria; and though the Entente countries were now to act in common to safeguard their independence, the word "integrity" was not used. This, the Prime Minister said, left the door open for Bulgaria to discuss territorial claims. As against these points, his Government had noted with regret and disappointment that the Entente, which was after all essentially against Bulgaria, had been extended for seven years.

Asked concerning his conversation with Mr. Saracioglu on his way to the Conference, the Prime Minister said that he had expounded Bulgaria's well-known policy of not insisting on territorial adjustments at the present time, which, however, were not being waived. The question of the Dobrudja had been discussed in detail, but when I asked whether the Aegean outlet had also been taken up with Mr. Saracioglu, he said it had not been explicitly mentioned, though he did refer in a general sense to Bulgaria's "economic needs." The Prime Minister added that his policy was realistic; he was not endeavoring to achieve the impossible, and he could see the other man's point of view.

As to the Turkish Foreign Minister's visits after the meeting, Mr. Kiosseivanoff said that Mr. Saracioglu informed him that he had placed before the Conference the Prime Minister's views and that Mr. Gafencu had given Rumania's usual reply, that surrounded on three sides by revisionist countries and as this was no time to take any steps which might dishearten the Rumanian people, Rumania could not now consider the return of the Dobrudja. Mr. Gafencu agreed, however, that this claim, unlike the Russian and Hungarian ones, was "legitimate" and promised to "lay it before his Government." At this point I asked whether this was not the first time a Rumanian Foreign Minister had admitted the justice of

Bulgaria's....

claim before a meeting of the Entente, and the Prime Minister said that it was. He stated that the Conference had taken note of Bulgaria's "loyal attitude" in not pressing its claim at this precarious juncture. When I suggested that it seemed that Bulgaria after striving for four years to convince her neighbors of her non bellicose intentions, had at last apparently succeeded in doing so, he said this was the case.

In my opinion, the Prime Minister has adroitly utilized the recent friendly visit of the Turkish Foreign Minister in bringing about a formal consideration of Bulgaria's claim and in causing the Conference to take cognizance of Bulgaria's willingness to postpone consideration of her territorial claims until a time when it may be done without jeopardizing peace in the Balkans. Mr. Saracioglu, on his return from Belgrade, also had a long interview with the King. I am reliably informed that the King is pleased with these recent developments in Balkan politics.

Asked whether he did not think the Russian menace to Bessarabia had greatly diminished, the Prime Minister fully agreed, adding that he believed that the Germans had succeeded in causing the Russians to postpone any action against Bessarabia. He said that the Finnish campaign had, of course, done much to hurt the prestige of the Russians, and not the least in Berlin.

As on previous occasions, he said it was in Germany's interest not to disturb the peace in the Balkans. Conversely, he thought it was in the interest

of....

of Great Britain to disrupt these sources of supply and that the allied army in Syria was doubtless organized with that possible eventuality. But he believed that the Allies could not open an eastern front without some plausible reason and he mentioned the possible use of the Rumanian guaranty as a pretext. In this relation he said that the recent Turkish assurances to Bulgaria provided that as long as this country remains neutral, Turkey will not only respect Bulgaria's neutrality but will prohibit the passage of any foreign troops. In reply to a question, Mr. Kiosseivanoff said that as matters now stand, Germany will not let Hungary disturb the peace of the Balkans.

Returning to the Bessarabian question, I asked whether he thought Turkey would really come to Rumania's assistance in case Russia went beyond the Pruth, and he said that he had asked the Turkish Foreign Minister this direct question. Mr. Saracioglu replied that on the question of resistance the Rumanians seemed to change their minds "every three days" and that it was impossible for him clearly to understand Rumanian policy.

Asked how he felt in general about continued peace in the Balkans, he replied that the prospects at the present time seemed more favorable and he felt hopeful. Certainly his whole attitude was not that of a man who felt his country was in any imminent danger.

H.M.

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LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Athens, February 12, 1940.

No. 3811

Subject: The "Harmonious Conference" of the Balkan Entente: Talks with the Greek Under Minister for Foreign Affairs.

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
MAR 25 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 20 1940
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

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ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
MAR 27 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

770.00/797

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

770.00/347

Sir:

Confirming my telegram No. 19 of February 6, 1940, I have the honor to report that I had on that day a long talk with the Greek Under Minister for Foreign Affairs concerning the recent conference of the Permanent Council of the Balkan Entente at Belgrade. The brief communiqué issued at the close of the conference had just appeared in the press, and I give it here as it was printed in the Messager d'Athènes, semi-official organ of the Greek Foreign Office (I translate from the French):

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MAR 27 1940

On the 2nd, 3rd and 4 th of February, 1940, Greece being represented by His Excellency, John Metaxas,

Metaxas, President of the Council and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Rumania by his Excellency, Gregory Gafenco, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Turkey by His Excellency, Sukru Saradjoglu, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Yugoslavia by His Excellency, Alexander Çinçar-Markoviç, Minister for Foreign Affairs, there took place some exchanges of views in the course of which the members of the Permanent Council were able to establish unanimously:

1. That the four States have a common interest in the maintenance of peace, order and security in the southeast of Europe.

2. That they are firmly decided to pursue their resolutely pacific policy in strictly maintaining their positions in regard to the present conflict, and to preserve this part of Europe from the trials of war.

3. That they are determined to remain united within the bosom of an Entente which pursues its own ends and is aimed at no one, and to safeguard the right of each one among them to its independence and national territory.

4. That they sincerely desire to maintain and develop amicable relations with neighboring states in a conciliatory spirit of mutual comprehension and peaceful collaboration.

5. That it is necessary to strengthen and improve the economic bonds and communications between the Balkan States, particularly by organizing commercial exchanges within the Entente.

6. That the Balkan Pact is to be prolonged for a new statutory period of seven years, beginning with the 9th of February, 1941.

7. That the four ministers for foreign affairs are decided to keep closely in touch with one another until the next ordinary session of the Permanent Council, which will take place at Athens in February, 1941.

Done at Belgrade, February 4, 1940.

In spite of the comment made to me by one of the most astute of our local diplomats, that any good observer could have written this communiqué in advance, the Department may agree with me that it is not wholly the pro forma affair which its prototypes of past years have been. The same diplomat later remarked more sagely, "These conferences always give the impression of a solidarity in the Balkans which does

not, in fact, exist, but nevertheless, such a solidarity might crystallize under pressure from without," and it seems to me that such pressure is already evident in clauses 1 and 2. At least, they appear to indicate an uneasy consciousness of this year's changed conditions and the possible spread of the present war. Furthermore, clause 3, with its statement, "they are determined . . . to safeguard the right of each one among them to its independence and territory," can hardly fail to create a suspicion that crystallization is already setting in. How far the process may have gone is another matter. The Counselor of the French Legation stated to me categorically the other night that a meeting of the military chiefs of the Entente States is now to be held without delay, but his own Naval Attaché, the Turkish Military Attaché, and others who should be equally in the know, have denied it just as squarely. Furthermore, the correspondent of the United Press has told me that in talking to the newspaper men in Belgrade, Mr. Gafenco interpreted clause 3 as meaning that the other Entente States would go to Rumania's aid if she is in any way attacked, but the story was not allowed to appear in the Greek press, and when I mentioned it to the Under Minister for Foreign Affairs, he replied, "Chacun s'en nourrit selon ses propres idées," meaning that the clause will naturally be interpreted as the interpreter desires. Yet it clearly remains open to such an interpretation as Mr. Gafenco is alleged to have made, and it was presumably not carelessly composed.

As reported in my telegram, Mr. Mavroudis replied to my question as to what really happened at the conference by stating that he would know the details better after the

Premier's

Premier's return, but that meanwhile he would give me his "impressions" of what constituted "the cream". With obvious reference to the first two clauses, he explained that the Turks came to the conference fearing that the Yugoslavs, because of the uneasiness of their exposed position, might be weakening in their allegiance to a group containing an ally of the Western Powers. The Yugoslavs, on the other hand, feared that the Turks might want the conference to dedicate itself to a "neutrality" in keeping with their own questionable brand. Both discovered, however, that their fears were unfounded. The Turks found the Yugoslavs more favorably disposed to Turkey's allies than they had anticipated, while the Yugoslavs found the Turks in no way exigent so far as concerns putting the Entente explicitly into the Allied camp. Thus a harmony of views was established on the basis, as clause 2 puts it, of each State's "maintaining its present position" in regard to the European conflict.

In regard to the questions covered in clauses 3 and 4, Mr. Mavroudis stated that without going so far as a military accord at this time, all four States showed themselves anxious to consult together if one is threatened with attack from without. He would not admit that any definite agreement was reached concerning mutual aid in the event of such aggression, but insisted that each State would make its own decision as and when the necessity arose for doing so. The statement that the powers concerned "sincerely desire to maintain and <u>develop</u> amicable relations with neighboring States", he elucidated by saying that there is a possibility of reviving the recent Rumanian neutral

bloc

bloc proposals, in another form, indeed, but still to include Hungary and Bulgaria. Thus, just as clause 2 represents a harmonizing of views between Turkey and Yugoslavia, clauses 3 and 4 represent satisfaction given to Rumania, and it only remains to be seen what, if anything, the Greeks got out of the conference, in order to understand how Mr, Mavroudis could say without blushing that it resulted in a "complete harmony of views".

Regarding the Greeks, I would refer not only to the above-mentioned telegram, but to my telegram No. 26 of today's date, 6 p.m., reporting a further conversation with the Under Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject of this conference. In both conversations Mr. Mavroudis mentioned a marked increase of confidence in regard to Bulgaria, but today he was both more explicit and more emphatic. He had promised me that after the Premier's return he would tell me in greater detail what the conference accomplished, but when he came to the point, nearly all he had to say was on this one subject. Apparently, then, what the Greeks got out of the meeting was an increased feeling of security in regard to their northern neighbor. Mr. Mavroudis stated categorically that the "most important" feature of the conference was the relaying by Mr. Saradjoglu of Mr. Kiosseivanoff's assurances that Bulgaria desires to follow a "parallel policy" with the Balkan States and will postpone presenting her territorial claims till after the war. He added that the Bulgarian Premier stated also that his country would take up arms if it were threatened with attack by either Germany or Russia, an attitude which has already been reported from Sofia.

Thus it would seem that the keynote of the conference

was

was fear,-the growing fear induced by the present war,- and that the particular form which this assumed in the case of each country concerned found some kind of answer during the exchange of views. Seen in this way, the conference can hardly be regarded as having "come to nothing", as one of my colleagues tells me he has reported. That it declared no definite common policy toward the several warring powers may seem to indicate weakness. Doubtless this was caused, to a certain extent, by the fundamental difference of orientation between the northern and southern members of the group, recently mentioned to me by Mr. Metaxas himself (see my telegram No. 8 of January 13, 4 p.m.) But it may also have something to do with the uncertainty prevailing in this region as to exactly what the Near Eastern policy of the belligerents may at present be, or in the future become. Nevertheless, one may attempt to read between the lines. Regarding the conference's attitude toward the Allies, Mr. Mavroudis said the other day that the Yugoslavs were glad to find that the other States were not in favor of constituting an eastern front as an offensive move against Germany. Today he remarked on the danger that the Allied economic blockade might force the Germans themselves to attack. Though, in their sympathies, the Entente States are clearly pro-Ally, they cannot be sure as to how little encouragement might induce a move on the part of France and England which would bring catastrophe to the Balkans. They would, therefore, seem to be walking warily with their friends. As regards Germany, their silence is perhaps even more eloquent. Mr. Mavroudis said that she desired the conference to make a declaration of strict neutrality. If this is so, then the avoidance of

all

all mention of neutrality in the communiqué speaks for itself and amounts to a rebuff. Finally, he said that Italy showed herself well disposed. Though the Balkan Entente is not to her liking, she still hopes to establish leadership of it by becoming the patron of each power separately. Some observers here state that for her the conference amounted to "un echec formidable", while others say that she pulled all the strings. The truth would seem to be that her benevolent attitude, particularly as this might affect Yugoslavia, facilitated the reaching of a conclusion favorable to England and France so long as their policy remains limited to the defensive in this area.

In conclusion I would say that Mr. Mavroudis, as well as other observers whom I have consulted, now think that the general international situation here may continue to remain undeveloped for some time longer, unless indeed the Allied blockade precipitates a German reaction at an earlier date than seems probable. The French Army in Syria is well organized, but still small. The British appear to have little if any force to spare with which to form an Eastern Front. And communications through the Mediterranean can hardly be counted on so long as Italy maintains her present enigmatical position. On the other hand, Germany appears unlikely to fight on two fronts unless forced to do so, and unwilling to risk the destruction

of

of her best remaining sources of supply. Finally, Russia seems temporarily out of the picture. Under these conditions, the Balkan Entente, in limiting mutually encouraging decisions at Belgrade to the apparently noncomittal, may properly have been moving in the temper of the times.

Respectfully yours,

Lincoln MacVeagh.

Lincoln MacVeagh.

File No. 710.

LMacV/hec

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Athens, February 16, 1940.

No. 3812.

Subject: New Consolidation and Orientation of the Balkan Entente: A talk with the Greek Premier.

Copy in Cr
DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
MAR 25 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 20 1940
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

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A-M/C
MAR 27 1940
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
MAR 27 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Belgrade Legation
Bucharest Legation
Athens Embassy

Ankara
Bucharest
Belgrade

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

3/28/40

Sir:

770.00/969

Confirming my telegram No. 29 of today's date, 4 p.m., I have the honor to report that in conversation this morning the Greek Premier, Mr. John Metaxas, discussed with apparent frankness the results of the recent meeting of the Permanent Council of the Balkan Entente at Belgrade and gave me in strict confidence some information which would seem of considerable interest. As the Department is aware, Mr. Metaxas is himself a member of the Council and attended the meeting.

In

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APR 2 1940

In my despatch No. 3811 of February 12, 1940, I included a translation of the official communiqué issued by the Conference at the close of its proceedings, and called attention to the wording of clause 3, which seemed to me to give grounds for suspecting that under stress of present conditions in Europe, the hitherto questionable solidarity of the Entente might be crystallizing into something more definite. For the sake of clarity I quote here again the pertinent words of the clause in question: "They (i.e., the Entente Powers) are determined . . . to safeguard the right of each one among them to its independence and national territory." I also reported that the local representative of the United Press had told me that Mr. Gafenco, in talking with newspaper men in Belgrade, had interpreted that clause as meaning that the other member states of the Entente would come to Rumania's help if she were attacked by Germany and Russia--an item of news which was not allowed to appear in the Greek press. Furthermore, Mr. Metaxas himself gave another indication of the way the wind might be blowing. On his return from Belgrade, he stopped over in Salonika and not only told the public that all had gone well at the conference, and that he would continue to work for an honorable peace, but, according to reliable information received by Vice Consul Gullion in that city, stated privately to senior army officers at General Headquarters that "if any of the Balkan States becomes the victim of an aggression Greece will have to fight" (see Confidential Report No. 86 of

February

February 8, 1940 from the Consulate at Salonika).

In answering my question as to what actually occurred at the conference, the Under Minister for Foreign Affairs refused to admit the other day, as reported in my despatch under reference, that any definite agreement had been reached concerning mutual aid in the event of aggression from outside the group. According to him the "determination" of all to safeguard the independence and territorial integrity of each was left open to interpretation as occasion might arise. Not so Mr. Metaxas, however, who left no room for doubt as to the existence of a definite engagement underlying the generality concerned. What he said not only confirmed my suspicion that a new solidarity may be crystallizing in the Balkans under pressure from without, but also justified the remarks Mr. Gafenco is alleged to have made, and explained his own reported statement at Salonika as to Greece's involvement in the event of outside aggression against any Balkan State.

Mr. Metaxas began by saying that the results of the Conference were principally three, as follows (1) The prolongation of the Entente for another period of seven years. This he insisted was important as affording an explicit answer to the charges made in the past that the Entente lacks vitality. Certainly, no announcement was necessary under the terms of the Pact itself, which is automatically renewable if not denounced. Perhaps the declaration was also intended to emphasize the failure of attempts to sabotage the conference on the part of

those

those who feel that a group which contains Turkey cannot at this time be truly neutral. (2) The going beyond the terms of the Pact itself so far as regards outside powers. Mr. Metaxas fumbled for his words on this point, and at first I thought he was referring to clause 4 and the possibility of reviving the recent neutral bloc proposals with invitations to Hungary and Bulgaria to join. (3) The establishment of greater confidence in Bulgaria's intentions on the basis of assurances given to Mr. Saradjoglu by the Bulgarian Prime Minister. This point had already been discussed with me by Mr. Mavroudis, as reported in my despatch under reference.

When I pressed Mr. Metaxas on point 2, he explained that the Conference had agreed that the various states should aid each other, not only as provided under the terms of the Balkan Pact (limited strictly to inter-Balkan attempts to change the status quo) but also in cases of attack from outside, and this seemed to me so extraordinary that I pressed him further, and asked whether this agreement had been written or was merely a verbal understanding. He replied, "We cover everything we do with procès-verbaux". I said, "So it really was written down, then", and he smiled, raised his eyebrows and spread his hands. It would thus appear that the minutes of the Conference at Belgrade contain a record of an undertaking which, as Mr. Metaxas went on to say, completely alters the character of the Entente. He said further that the group now constitutes a definite obstacle to "a German or Russian descent into the Balkans" and even (with perhaps a touch of wishful thinking) will defeat any such undertaking. I started to ask him how

Yugoslavia could remain a member of the Entente under these conditions unless Italy were agreeable, but he broke in with the statement, "It is we, Turkey and Greece, who are obligated to go to their assistance". He waved aside any possibility of an attack on the Balkan group from the Allied Powers, and explained that under existing conditions it is the northern members, Yugoslavia and Rumania, which are in jeopardy, so that the onus of the new agreement falls on the southern. This, of course, is obvious, but his excitement showed to what extent he is conscious of his own responsibility. I continued to ask him about Italy and he replied that she can be regarded as favorably disposed, as her policy is now genuinely neutral and not merely non-belligerent, her cooperation with Germany being a thing of the past. To a question as to whether the General Staffs of the Entente would presently assemble to discuss plans for military cooperation in case of attack, Mr. Metaxas replied that he thought this unlikely at present, as plans are already in existence. In this connection he referred to the last meeting of the military chiefs, here in Athens last summer, and it is of course possible that plans were then discussed for mutual protection of "independence and national territory" against outsiders as well as against Bulgaria. I asked Mr. Metaxas whether the obligation of Turkey and Greece to help their friends was at all contingent on Bulgaria's joining the Entente or at least remaining neutral, and he replied in the negative.

Mr. Metaxas then went on to discuss the general European situation as it affects the Near East. He said

he

he believes that neither the Allies, nor the Germans, nor the Italians desire to see the war extend into this area at present and that Russia's "defeat" in Finland, and the consequent ascendancy over her which has been gained by Germany, render Soviet aggression in Bessarabia unlikely in the near future. For this reason, as well as in consequence of the new Balkan consolidation, he feels the local status quo is safer "for the moment" than has recently been the case. Incidentally, he said he thinks Germany has no intention of attacking in the West, either, at this time.

If Mr. Metaxas is telling the truth about the agreement or understanding reached at Belgrade, the conference would appear to have been a notable victory for the Allies, though only of a defensive nature. From what Mr. Mavroudis told me, it seems that to reach such a result, and perhaps even to avoid a break-down of the Entente, would have been impossible on any other basis than a conviction on the part of all concerned that England and France have no offensive designs in this area. On the other hand it might have been equally impossible to get Turkey and Greece to agree to support their northern friends if there had been no expeditionary force in Syria capable of forming an effective nucleus of defense. Thus bread cast upon the waters seems to be returning after many days, and Weygand's mission may already be credited with results. Whether, after having worked the Turks, and now the Balkan Entente, up to the point of envisaging

resistance

resistance with allied support to any aggression which may be perpetrated by Germany or Russia in this area, the Allies will attempt to develop this advantage in an offensive direction and imbue these people with a more positive allegiance to their cause, perhaps only time can tell.

Respectfully yours,

Lincoln MacVeagh.

Lincoln MacVeagh.

File No. 710.

LMacV/hec

LEGATION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. 876 Belgrade, February 14, 1940.

Subject: Conversation with Prince Regent Paul.

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1940 MAR 19 PM 2 21

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

CONFIDENTIAL
FOR THE SECRETARY AND UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE.

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
MAR 25 1940
File Cor
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ADVISER ON POLITICAL RELATIONS
MR. DUNN
MAR 22
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
MAR 21 1940
MR. BERLE

SECRETARY OF STATE
MAR 20 1940

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Note

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The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

770.00/758

With reference to my strictly confidential telegram No. 42, of February 10, 11 a.m., concerning my conversation with Prince Regent Paul on February 9, I have the honor to transmit with this despatch

1/- a memorandum of the interview.

Respectfully yours,

Arthur Bliss Lane

Arthur Bliss Lane.

MAR 27 1940

FILED

GRR

Enclosure: as stated.

File No. 800.1
HMBjr/iv

2 Received 7P

American Legation, Belgrade.
Enclosure to Despatch No. 876
February 14, 1940.

MEMORANDUM

of Conversation with Prince Regent Paul on February 9, 1940, 7 p.m.

Not having seen the Prince since the Christmas holidays, I expressed the hope that he had passed the holidays as pleasantly as present conditions permitted. He said "Don't talk to me about holidays", and added that the word "holiday" no longer existed for him. He said that especially on Sundays people seemed to like to bother him. For instance, last Sunday (February 4), he had had interviews in the morning with Cincar-Marković, Cvetković and Milan Antić, and all of Sunday afternoon was taken up with Metaxas.

1. Mrs. Anne O'Hare McCormick.

I told the Prince that I realized how busy he was and that I did not wish to add to his worries, but I did have one request to make of him: for him to receive Mrs. Anne O'Hare McCormick, Editor of the NEW YORK TIMES, who is now in Europe. She was in Belgrade to cover the Balkan Entente Meeting and had previously had conversations with François-Poncet in Rome, with Léger in Paris, and with Admiral Horthy in Budapest. I said that she had also seen Ambassador Phillips in Rome and was consequently in a position to furnish the Prince with interesting information concerning the international situation. She is entirely reliable and would of course not quote the Prince. I thought, furthermore, that it would be mutually valuable to have the interview.

The Prince shook his head and said he would like to accommodate me, especially as Mrs. McCormick is associated with the NEW YORK TIMES

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a paper for which he has always had a special affection, because of his affection for the late Louis Wiley. He was afraid however that he would not be able to see her, as he recently had been forced to refuse the requests made by the Italian and French Ministers to receive correspondents of their respective nationalities. He said furthermore that he disliked, in principle, to receive correspondents, for even though they may be the most reliable persons in the world, it is possible that they may repeat a fragment of conversation to a person who is not reliable and then the harm is done. The Prince expressed the hope that I would understand his point of view. I said that of course I understood his attitude, but I did wish him to know that Mrs. McCormick is a famous personage who, I thought, was in a different category from the run of the mine journalists.

2. Captain Kinkaid.

In connection with the discussion of the Italian situation, as described below, I mentioned that Captain Kinkaid would shortly be arriving in Belgrade and would be in a position to give the latest information on the situation. I expressed the hope that the Prince would receive Captain Kinkaid, and he said he would be glad to do so.

3. Prince Orloff.

I said that there was some possibility that Prince Orloff might be excluded from the United States, even though he had already received a visa from the Consulate; I said that his exclusion would depend on the Department of Labor and not on the Department of State, but in view of the interest which the Prince had shown in this case, I wished to inform him thereof. The Prince replied "I have no interest in the case whatever". He said that he had only met Prince Orloff once about four months ago when Orloff had arrived here; that he virtually does not know the man and that his only interest in the

case

case was to get him out of Yugoslavia. He said that he understood Orloff has been married to an American woman and inquired whether or not this might change his status in going to the United States. I expressed the opinion that it would change his status, but said that I had information that he had not been married and doubted the accuracy of the report. The Prince said he thought I would find that his information was correct.

4. Charles S. Wilson.

I said that I hoped that the Prince would forgive me if I brought up a question of a somewhat personal character. It had to do with a conversation Prince Paul had had a short time ago with Mrs. Joyce in which the Prince had expressed his surprise that my predecessor, Mr. Wilson, had not requested an audience to say "Good-by" to him.

I said that I knew for a fact that Mr. Wilson had requested an audience and had waited three weeks to be received. In fact Mr. Wilson had written to me in Riga requesting me to delay my arrival until his audience had taken place. I said to the Prince that I had always felt that he personally had not been advised of Mr. Wilson's request, especially as an official of the Marshalate, to whom I had observed my surprise that Mr. Wilson had not been received, had said, "He was rather old". I remarked to the Prince that I did not see that age would prevent a gentleman like Mr. Wilson, who was extremely punctilious in matters of etiquette, to pay his respects on leaving Yugoslavia.

The Prince appeared to be considerably embarrassed by my remark and said that he had not wished to convey to Mrs. Joyce that he took the matter seriously. He had made this observation merely in the midst of an informal conversation.

5. Italo-Turkish Relations.

I said that we had had a lot of conflicting information regarding

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the

the relationship between Italy and Turkey and asked the Prince if he would be good enough to let me have his views on the subject. He replied that the relations are correct but nothing more. I said that I had the impression that relations have become more cordial since the improvement of Anglo-Italian relations. The Prince made an expression of surprise and then said that with Italy one must not expect her to make a move unless it is solely in her interest. If I could tell him what the opinion of the Italian Government is as to who will win the war then he could tell me whether Italy is sincerely endeavoring to cultivate close relations with Turkey. The Turks, he said, desire to have close relations with Italy. He added that Italy wished to be on the side of the victors of the war and with the victors' friends. He knew for a fact that Mussolini thought, when the war started, that the Germans would win. It was not necessarily that he was pro-German or anti-Ally, but that he felt Italy's interest was to be on the winning side. Whether Mussolini has changed his attitude, he does not know, but he has received no information to make him think so. It is possible, however, that Finnish successful resistance to Russia might be a determining factor in changing his attitude.

6. Italo-Yugoslav Relations.

I said that we had had a report from Rome that the Italian attitude towards Yugoslavia has become more friendly and I mentioned the amelioration of relations between Italy and the Balkan States, stating that this seemed to be one of the good results of the Balkan Entente meeting. The Prince said that he thought the Balkan Entente meeting had been successful and that it is a move in favor of peace. As to my remark regarding betterment of relations between Italy and the Balkan States, he observed "I wonder?" He likewise expressed interest, almost surprise, that diplomatic circles in Rome believed Italy's attitude towards Yugoslavia to be improved. He said that Italy's

attitude

attitude is confusing. Italian officials are continually reiterating their desire for a strong and united Yugoslavia. On the other hand Ciano has privately stated to a number of persons that communism exists here and that Italy is going to take some action with regard to Yugoslavia. Since the Prince had last seen me he had received additional proof that communistic propaganda has been disseminated in Yugoslavia by the Italian Government. He said it was impossible for him to understand what is behind this policy. He said that his visit to Zagreb should be convincing proof of the unification of Yugoslavia and that any attempt at separatism would fail. He added that he is convinced of the desire of the Italian people for peace, but unfortunately in totalitarian States the wishes of the people do not count. For instance, he is convinced that the German people did not desire the war, but it is not the German people who decide: it is Hitler. He said that Italy, like Germany, is talking of its need for "vital space" and seems to wish for this reason to show greater interest in the Balkans and in Yugoslavia. He said that Yugoslavia might also wish lebensraum, in China perhaps.

7. Finnish-Soviet Relations.

He said that he was very much disappointed regarding the United States not giving greater help to Finland. He thought that we would always regret it, as Finland's downfall would bring about the downfall of all of Scandinavia. I said that I thought we had done considerable for Finland. In fact the Senate Committee had, according to the press, recommended the grant of a credit of $100,000,000. The Prince expressed surprise and said he thought I was incorrect. I replied that I had no official information, but I had seen this report in the press. I added that the feeling in the United States towards Finland was extremely cordial and I felt certain that we

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would

would help Finland in every practicable way. The Prince said that he was afraid that even though we should help Finland, the assistance would arrive too late. He then referred to the Soviet Union as being nothing but a bluff. He said that he had known for twenty years that it was nothing but a bluff. Other countries which had Military Attachés there for some reason or other had been fooled by the false statement which the Soviet Government made regarding its organization and its army. Now the truth is finally known to everyone.

Belgrade, February 9, 1940.

ABL/iv

770.00/799

COPY:EG

LEGATION OF THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA

Atens, January 17, 1940.

Dear Franklin:

Thank you for your note of December 1st, which reached me in the last pouch. How do you manage to remember us all?

The situation here has not greatly changed, except that the Russian menace is more clearly in men's minds. If Soviet Russia is really started on the Imperialistic quest of the Czars, the Straits are certainly in her thoughts, and from the point of view of Grand Strategy the path in this direction is open to her as never before. A good deal must depend on how much she is weakened by the Finland affair, of course, but while the new Italian tie-up with Hungary may discourage a German push into the Balkans, there is little to stop Russia moving south along the Black Sea coast, with the French concentrations as far away as Beirut and the British Mediterranean Fleet based on Malta and Alexandria. The Greek Premier, General Metaxas who is an excellent strategist trained in Berlin, where they called him the "Little Moltke", said to me the other day, however, that he thinks Russia is "preparing" an attack on the Straits, which will be more direct and allow no chance at all for British warships to get into the Black Sea. He thinks that her present great efforts to capture public opinion in Bulgaria are with a view to drawing that country on to her side and getting her to attack Istanbul in conjunction with the Soviet air force and fleet. The Turkish forces are practically non-existent on the sea and in the air, and in mechanical equipment are very weak indeed at present. A squeeze on Rumania would probably take place at the same time, but the main effort would be securing the Straits before help (except from the Greeks) could arrive. Once astride the Bosphorus the Slav might be hard to dislodge even by a large coalition. Incidentally, he thinks the King and the Premier of Bulgaria are fighting a losing battle against the rising tide of Russian influence in their country.

General Metaxas didn't press these ideas, but they will show what Russian activity in Bulgaria and the present stalemate in warring Europe are causing wary people to think in these parts. The General did stress the fact that Germany's dependence on Russia for vital supplies puts her in an inferior position towards her new friend, and he said, both at the beginning and the end of our conversation, that the outstanding feature about the present European situation is that of all the Great Powers Russia alone enjoys the opportunity of initiative.

Ever yours affectionately,

LINCOLN MACVEAGH

770.00/800

Filed Mar. 21, 1940

EG.

February 14 1940

770.00/800

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My dear Mr. President:

In accordance with your memorandum of February 10, in Mr. Welles's absence 1940, I enclose a draft of a letter which you may consider an appropriate reply to Mr. Lincoln MacVeagh's letter of January 17.

Faithfully yours,

A. A. BERLE, JR.

GR
FEB 14 1940

GG T

The President,

The White House.

NE:PHA:EG 2/13

A true copy of the signed original

800

Dear Lincoln:

Thank you for your letter of January 17 giving your estimate of possible moves in the Balkan area and around the Straits. I am glad to have your views and those of General Metaxas and I hope that you will write me further as the situation develops.

Ever yours,

The Honorable
Lincoln MacVeagh,
American Minister.
Athens.

NE:PHA:EG 2/13

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FEB 14 1940

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ORIGINAL DOCUMENT BEARING THIS FILE NUMBER WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE WHITE HOUSE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LETTER FROM THE WHITE HOUSE DATED DEC. 14, 1943, FILE NUMBER 116.3/4763

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT

Turkish Ambassador stated that Germany and Soviet Union are concerned at success of Balkan Entente meeting. An agreement in principle has been reached regarding the Dobrudja but effect will not be given thereto at present.

770.CC/801 Confidential File

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel.#247 6 p m
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated March 6 1940 From / To U.S.S.R.(Steinhardt)

File No. 761.67/267

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

bb

801

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Reactions in Belgrade to the resignation of Bulgarian Prime Minister and formation of a new government under Dr. Filoff with Mr. Ivan Popoff~~s~~ at present Bulgarian Minister to Yugoslavia.

770.00/802

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Des. #885
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Feb.17,1940 From Yugoslavia (Lane)
To

File No. 874.00/618

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

802

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Meeting of the Balkan Entente at Belgrade. A great deal of space was devoted to the- and optimistic statements have appeared with regard to peace and security having been established in the Near East.

770.00/803

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For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Desp. #351
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Feb.9,1940 From / To Barcelona (Bucknell)

File No. 852.9111/33

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

803

(c) A great deal of space was also devoted to the meeting of the Balkan Entente at Belgrade (see my despatch No. 352 of February 9, 1940) and optimistic statements have appeared with regard to peace and security having been established in the Near East as a result (1) of the wise leadership of Italy and (2) of the determination of the Balkan Entente to maintain its neutrality.

(d) Considerable speculation was noted with

regard

regard to the recent resignation of the Commander in Chief of the Dutch Army but the consensus of local opinion appears to be that this resignation was caused by internal and not external reasons.

(e) It was strongly denied that negotiations were taking place between Spain and the Vatican as had been alleged in "certain foreign countries".

HSM **TELEGRAM RECEIVED**

Rome

FROM

Dated April 5, 1940

Rec'd 8:53 a. m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

239, April 5, noon.

The left wing Fascist weekly RELAZIONI INTERNAZIONALE carried a leading and probably inspired article on March 13th describing Italo, Balkan and Danubian policy. Italy's relations with Yugoslavia, Greece, Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary described in some detail were considered cordial and satisfactory but Turkey was ignored. Rumors regarding a Balkan agreement between Italy, Germany and Russia were branded as a deliberate attempt to "immobilize Italy in the Balkans" and as false and wholly unfounded. It was true that Italy was interested in the Balkans but her fundamental interests were "on the continent and in the Mediterranean"; Italy's entire policy in the Balkans aimed at balance and not upheaval and was dictated by vital considerations not hegemonic aims. That policy would be pursued "until the achievement of those results and goals which the Italian people expect to derive therefrom for their just peace and for the prosperity

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APR 8 1940

prosperity of themselves and their children".

Particularly noteworthy were passages in which it was asserted that in the future reorganization of Europe, Hungary would have an important place and a categorical denial that Italy was seeking to weaken the unity of Yugoslavia. With regard to Rumania it was stated that both belligerents in the present conflict were using Russia in "their maneuvers" which might at a certain moment "have considerable weight and importance for certain questions of historical and political character localized in Bessarabia. It was obvious that Russia might be the motive / center of a revision in the Balkan map which would first of all, because of contiguity of frontiers, strike at Rumania. "Such a movement would immediately foment other claims likewise of a territorial nature".

PHILLIPS

KLP

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D) or (E)
OSD letter, May 3, 1972
By DRB/BAM, NARS Date 2-4-75

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YUGOSLAVIA

COMMENTS ON CURRENT EVENTS

February 16, 1940

(No. 24)

1. The Balkan Conference.
2. Relations between French and British Officers.

. . . . . .

1. The Balkan Conference.

It is assumed that the Division is in possession of the official communique issued at the close of the Balkan conference held in Belgrade February 2-4, 1940.

Upon my recent return to Belgrade I was informed by General Merson, French M/A, that he had obtained through various excellent sources the following information concerning the questions discussed by the four Foreign Ministers, but kept secret:

a. Foreign Minister Gafencu of Rumania is alleged to have requested that the four member states of the Balkan Entente engage themselves individually to defend in common any infringement of the territory of any one of the Member States. Foreign Minister Metaxas of Greece is alleged to have interposed an objection. In lieu thereof Mr. Metaxas is said to have proposed "A defense of the national independence of any one of the member states by collective action of the other members".

b. It is alleged that Foreign Minister Sarajoglu of Turkey obtained from Foreign Minister Gafencu the assurance that the "Triangle of Silistria" in Dobrudja would be returned to Bulgaria after the war provided that Bulgaria would remain neutral. Minister Sarajoglu was designated to stop at Sofia to communicate this information to the Bulgarian authorities.

c. It is alleged that Foreign Minister Metaxas informed the conference that the Greek Government would be willing to grant to Bulgaria a free port on the Aegean Sea as well as free passage to this port across Greek territory. However, that Greece would not consent to any cession of its territory to Bulgaria.

d. It is alleged that Foreign Minister Cincar-Markovic had but one theme throughout the conference, that of proclaiming the neutrality of Yugoslavia, avoiding entangling military alliances, and issuing sugar-coated statements to his neighbors, including Italy.

COMMENTS:

I have obtained no confirmation of the above, and submit it with full reservations. However, it must be added that General Merson is usually very well informed and that he was following the conference very closely.

2. Relations between French and British Officers.

Following up my telegram No. 117, it is desired to throw additional light on the difficulties that French and British officers have in working for a common cause.

The British M/A in Belgrade speaks very little French. The French M/A doesn't understand one word of English. Their relations have been outwardly cordial but far from sympathetic and cooperative.

The French M/A told me yesterday that he had not even seen the British M/A for nearly two months. General Merson, referring to my recent visit to Syria, told me that he had heard recently from General Weygand who told him that "While it bothered him terrifically, he thought it necessary to make a gesture towards General Wavell and visit his Command in Cairo".

The British M/A, in leaving Yugoslavia on a short leave, instructs his Chief Clerk to get in touch with me in lieu of the French in case any military question arises during his absence.

Sources:
As indicated.

LOUIS J. FORTIER
Major, General Staff
Military Attache

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Chances of keeping the war from spreading to the Balkans; Conversation with the the new Bulgarian Foreign Minister regarding- and he said that he was an "optimist" on this point.

mr

770.00/ 806

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See #434
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Mar. 2, 1940 **From / To** Bulgaria (Millard)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/1955

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Formation of a bloc between Hungary, Yugoslavia and Italy;

Representations made by the Apostolic Nuncio to the Yugoslav Government recommending the-

mr

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #90, 3 p.m.
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Apr. 4, 1940 **From / To** Yugoslavia (Lane)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/1967

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

770.00807

FP

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Political situation in the Balkans;

Outline of the- All the Balkan States do not want war.

mr

770.00/803

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #30, 1 pm
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Apr. 8, 1940 **From / To** Bulgaria (Earle)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/1990

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

770.00

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Military situation in the Balkans;

Reports conversation which the Turkish Military Attache had with the Chief of the Greek General Staff regarding the-

mr

770.00/809

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See #3944
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Mar. 19, 1940 **From / To** Greece (MacVeagh)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/2022

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

GM4b9

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
APR 16 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

EDA
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone (BR)

FROM ANKARA

Dated April 13, 1940

Received 3:20 p.m.

Secretary of State

Washington

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

770.00/776 C.F.

38, April 13, 4 p.m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

My telegram No. 19, February 26, 1 p.m.

One. Information received from a dependable non-Balkan military source confirms the existence of an unwritten understanding among the countries of the Balkan Entente for mutual support in the event of attack by an outside power upon any of their territories (with the possible exlcusion of Bessarabia). The Turkish insistence upon having this understanding set forth in treaty form was vetoed by Rumania.

Two. From the same source it is understood that apart from its oral assurance to the other Balkan governments that it would resist the passage of any armed forces whatsoever through its territories the Bulgarian Government has taken under consideration a proposal that in the event of an invasion of the Balkans by an outside power involving Bulgarian territory it would permit Turkish and Greek forces to enter and cooperate in the defense.

MAC MURRAY

770.00/810
FILED
APR 18 1940

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Turkey's desire to bring about general mobilization in the Balkans.

Conversation with Prince Regent who neither confirmed nor denied reports regarding-

mr

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #242, 8 pm
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated June 6, 1940 From / To Yugoslavia (Lane)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/3576 Confidential File

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

770.00/818 EA Confidential File

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
RECEIVED
SEP 18 1940
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
SEP 16 1940
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

September 13, 1940

NE:

It would appear from the paraphrase of telegram 143, August 30, 4 p.m., from Ankara, that there has been a misinterpretation of the sense of paragraph 3. Eu believes that the sentence which has been decoded as "hopeful that their reconcilability of the interests of Russia, Germany, and Italy in the Balkans" should read "hopeful that the irreconcilability of the interests of Russia, Germany, and Italy in the Balkans". Eu has no information that would lead it to believe that the interests of these three powers have been reconciled in southeastern Europe.

FILED
SEP 18 1940

Eu:Coe:DKP

Paraphrase of telegram no. 143 of August 30, 1940 from the American Embassy at Ankara.

Because of the increased tension at the present time in the Balkan area my interpretation of the development of the foreign policy of Turkey may be helpful. The foreign policy of the country, which was established by Atatürk and which is still being applied under changing conditions, is necessarily defensive and pacific and does not aspire toward any acquisition of territory (other than the case of Hatay, which is regarded by the Turks as a special case), concerning itself only with the opportunity of building up a country which would be free from economic domination or interference from other countries and maintaining territorial independence and integrity. I believe that Atatürk laid down the principle that the necessary interests of the country could be served best if Turkey would align herself with Great Britain. Therefore Turkey's agreement of May 12, 1939 with Great Britain and the tripartitite agreement of October 19 were more an application to an established principle of action than an ad hoc adjustment to a present-day situation. However, with respect to the belief now current that in order to exist on neighborly terms with Russia the Turks must (?), it is pointed out that there was a

provision in the tripartite treaty stating that any action against the Soviet Union would not obligate the Turks to participate. It may well be that the Turks thought that this qualifying provision in the tripartite alliance would be a strong factor in the defense of the country, except in case of aggression against their Near Eastern or Balkan neighbors, which would in any case be a threat to Turkey, and that such an agreement offered them the greatest possibility of keeping free of any hostile action. It is my belief that the Turks were ready to engage in hostilities and until recently were urging the countries of the Balkan Entente to engage in hostilities to protect the Balkan Peninsula at any point at which Germany or Italy attempted to intrude. Regarding the last-mentioned country, there was an undercurrent of junior military opinion spoiling for a go at that country and anxious for an opportunity to win the Dodecanese back.

Tendencies to military exuberance have abated because of occurrences during the last four months and the Turks are now faced with the problem of making their fixed policy applicable to the following circumstances which they did not envisage: France and her army in the Near East need no longer be considered; Turkey must now face the fact that the friendship of Russia is doubtful; though Turkey is still loyal to Great Britain and believes

that that country will be victorious, the fact is that England is being beseiged at home and that she could not be expected to give any effective aid in the Mediterranean because of her preoccupation with the task of defending the Suez Canal; the demonstration of ruthlessness and power of Germany has frightened the Balkan States;and, last but not least, the potential enemies of Turkey have proved that they can carry disorganization and devastation far behind the fighting lines because of their superiority in the air. Turkey has now had to make a reassessment of her military and political situation because of the above-mentioned developments. It is evident that the Turks' earlier conception of the situation has been abandoned, though they are still determined to fight in their own defense, if necessary, and that the geographical (?) area within which they would deem it practicable and advantageous from a military standpoint to meet any threat to the vital interests of the country had been narrowed. Turkey is not obligated to lend aid to any of its Balkan neighbors unless they are attacked by Bulgaria. Excluding the possibility that the putting into effect of the British guaranty to Greece might draw Turkey into hostilities, it is my belief that Turkey would not now engage in any hostile action beyond her borders unless Turkey invades Greece on a large scale. Reports from the Legation at Athens that Turkey is now considering certain contingencies in which they would consider it necessary

to their own interests to support Greece have been confirmed by information which I have obtained here.

Though the possibilities mentioned above are being considered by the Turks, they still have some hopes that ~~the~~ interests in the Balkans of Germany, Italy and Russia can be reconciled, ~~and that such reconciliation will prevent~~ will be prevented any of those three powers from taking any action which would start a conflict as long as they act together. Because the Turks feel that after this a more favorable situation can be expected, their altered situation and upset calculations do not cause them as much anxiety as one might expect.

CORRECTION of final page of paraphrase of telegram no. 143 of August 30, 1940, from the American Embassy at Ankara.

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to their own interests to support Greece have been confirmed by information which I have obtained here.

Though the possibilities mentioned above are being considered by the Turks, they still have some hopes that since the interests in the Balkans of Germany, Italy and Russia cannot be reconciled, any of those three powers will be prevented from taking any action which would start a conflict as long as they act together. Because the Turks feel that after this a more favorable situation can be expected, their altered situation and upset calculations do not cause them as much anxiety as one might expect.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

RDS
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (Br.)

FROM

ANKARA

Dated August 30, 1940

Rec'd 6:15 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
SEP 3 1940
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Secretary of State,

Washington.

143, August 30, 4 p.m.

One. In view of the present increase of tension in the Balkan area it may be useful to set in perspective the developement of Turkey's foreign policy as I interpret it. That policy as established by Ataturk and still applied under varying conditions is essentially pacific and defensive looking to no territorial acquisitions (apart from what the Turks regard as the wholly special case of Hatay) and concerned only with the maintenance of territorial integrity independence and the opportunity to build up a new country free from outside interference or economic domination. There is reason to believe that he laid down the doctrine that those vital national interests would be best served by aligning Turkey with the British Empire. The preliminary agreement of May 12, 1939 with Great Britain and the final tripartite treaty of October 19 represented therefore not an ad hoc adjustment to a current situation so much as an application of an established principle of action.

In

770.00/823

GMR

FILED
SEP 13 1940

U - LIAISON OFFICE
SEP 10
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

In deference, however, to the current principle that Turkey must (?) to live on terms of good neighborhood with the Soviet Union, this tripartite conditional alliance was qualified by a provision the purport of which is that this country should not be obligated to participate in any initiative directed against Russia. The Turks may well have calculated that the alliance in this form gave them the maximum possibility of remaining uninvolved in hostilities save in the event of aggression against their Balkan or Near Eastern associates which would in any case constitute a threat to Turkey and that in that contingency the alliance would afford a very strong support to the defense of this country. I think it is clear that this government was prepared to fight and up to recently was active in urging the cooperation of the other members of the Balkan Entente in armed resistance in case of a German or Italian thrust into the Balkan Peninsula at any point. With respect to Italy there was furthermore an undercurrent of junior military opinion spoiling for a go at the Italians and eager for a chance to win back the Dodecanese.

Two. The events of the past four months, however, have not only abated any tendency to military exuberance but have presented to this government the problem of applying their fixed policy to a set of circumstances

quite

quite different from what they had envisaged: they must reckon with the facts that Russia's friendship has become dubious; that France and her Near Eastern Army have ceased to be a factor; that England (in spite of their loyal attachment and their belief in her ultimate victory) is beleaguered at home, and in the Mediterranean so preoccupied with the essential task of defending the Suez Canal that she could not be counted on to give effective assistance; that the Balkan States are all utterly cowed by the demonstration of Germany's power and ruthlessness; and that (perhaps most important of all) superiority of air power such as their potential enemies possess has proved capable of carrying devastation and disorganization far back of the fighting lines as hitherto conceived. As a result of these developments The Turks have of necessity had to reassess their political and military situation; and while they remain determined to fight if necessary in their own defence, it seems plain that they have realistically abandoned their earlier conceptions and have progressively narrowed the geographical (?) the area within which they would consider it practicable and militarily advantageous to meet any threat to their own vital interests. They are of course under no obligation to assist any of their Balkan associates against attack by any country other than Bulgaria. Aside therefore

from

from the possibility that Turkey might be drawn in through the operation of the British guaranty to Greece I am inclined to believe that as a matter of practical fact she would not now undertake hostilities outside of her own borders unless perhaps in the event of Italian invasion of Greece on such a scale or in such form as to suggest a thrust towards the Turkish frontier rather than a mere nibble at the territory adjacent to Albania. Such information as I have been able to obtain tends to confirm the reports of the Athens Legation that the Turks were recently disposed to do no more than hold the ring against Bulgaria in the event of Italy's attacking Greece but have since been considering (although I understand no decision has been reached) contingencies in which they would find it necessary in their own interests to give active support to Greece.

Three. While considering these possibilities, however, the Turks are at least moderately hopeful that the irreconcilability of the interests of Russia, Germany, and Italy in the Balkans will prevent any one of those powers taking action that would precipitate a conflict so long as they continue to act in concert--after which time a more favorable situation might well be anticipated they therefore seem to feel much less anxiety than might

be

be expected in view of the developments that have so fundamentally altered their situation and upset their calculations.

MACMURRAY

NPL

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

RDS

PLAIN

FROM

MOSCOW

Dated September 16, 1940

Rec'd 11:22 p.m.

Copies sent to WAR, ONI, 9-17-40

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS SEP 17 1940 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State,

Washington.

1180, Sixteenth.

The KRASNYI FLOT, organ of the Peoples Commissariat for Naval Affairs, published on September 15, a signed article entitled "Balkan States and the war in Europe" which reviews the various political and diplomatic moves of the belligerent powers in the Balkans since the outbreak of the war, with particular reference to the attempts of the English and French to prevent the raw materials of the Balkan peninsula from reaching Germany and Italy, attempts which according to the author, despite the application of economic pressure and military sanctions in the form of the blockade, failed to achieve their purpose. The author then comments upon the injustices perpetrated by the Anglo-French imperialists following the last war and in this connection praises the peaceful settlement of the Bessarabian question by the Soviet Union and also refers to the results of the Vienna Arbitration which returned an appreciable portion of Transylvania to Hungary.

After

770.00

770.00/825

U - LIAISON OFFICE SEP 1940 DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FILED SEP 27 1940 G/HC

After asserting that the imperialist struggle for the Balkan peninsula has not yet terminated, as testified by the repeated declarations of England concerning the guaranty to Greece and by the "desire of Germany to strengthen its economic position in the Balkan peninsula," the author concludes: "The Soviet Union stands apart from this war and its contradictions. The Soviet state is settling peacefully the disputed questions which were bequeathed to it from the past. It is clear that each question settled by such methods and by the mutual consent of the parties concerned lays a basis for a firm and enduring peace between states."

STEINHARDT

EMB

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

RDS
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (Br.)

FROM

SOFIA

Dated September 19, 1940

Rec'd 6:05 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
SEP 24 1940
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

seen by MID
DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
SEP 20 1940
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State

Washington.

121, September 19, 4 p.m.

770.00

770.00/826

The Foreign Minister informed me today that Bulgaria will continue her policy of patient waiting for an egress to the Aegean with no threats or action of any kind against any nation.

He is delighted with the Dobrudja settlement, contrasting the Bulgarian acquisition of the Dobrudja with its Bulgarian population (once the Rumanian population of 72,000 are repatriated) with the Hungarian acquisition of Transylvania with that part of its population of over 1,000,000 who are not Hungarians.

He believes that Germany wants only tranquillity in the Balkans and has no idea of invading Turkey.

He feels certain that in the event of an Italian-Greek war Bulgaria can stay out.

He says the Bulgarian people and Government are very grateful to Germany for receiving the Dobrudja but that this gratitude will not change Bulgaria's policy of neutrality nor has Germany given any intimation that such is her desire.

FILED
SEP 25 1940

I

-2- #121, September 19, 4 p.m., from Sofia.

I feel that the Foreign Minister is sincere but is somewhat of a Pollyanna.

EARLE

EMB

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Germany and Italy to subject Yugoslavia, Greece, and Bulgaria to complete axis domination.

rr

770.00/827

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #1209, 11 p.m.
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Sept. 23, 1940 From / To U.S.S.R. (Steinhardt)

File No. 762.9411/11 Confidential File

FP Confidential File 827

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

MEV

PLAIN

FROM London

Dated January 15, 1942

Rec'd 8:25 a.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JAN 16 1942
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JAN 15 1942
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State,

Washington.

Fifteenth.

YUGOSLAV SERIES 3 FROM BIDDLE

Agreement between Yugoslav and Greek Governments regarding creation of a Balkan Union, text of which was forwarded with my despatch Yugoslav series number 5, January 6 last, was signed today.

870.00/24,25

WINANT

WSB

770.00/830

PS/MH

FILED
JAN 19 1942

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JAN 23 1942
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JW

PLAIN

FROM
Ankara

Dated January 22, 1942

Rec'd 11:07 p.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
File Gen
JAN 23 1942
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

43, twenty-second

770.00
740.0011 EW

Commenting on Greek Yugoslav pact signed at London Deptuy Esmer in semiofficial ULUS remarks that Balkan Union envisaged by this pact goes much further than the former entente. The latter he asserts had following three weaknesses, (first) its use by certain Balkan politicians for domestic political purposes, (second) refusal of Bulgaria to enter entente and (third) its disapproval by great powers and their efforts on every occasion to create obstacles to to its success. In conclusion he states that Ataturk was wholehearted partisan of Balkan ideology but understood that is was impossible to attain its aims in so short a time.

Deputy Sadak considered to reflect Foreign Office opinion, recalling Turkish efforts to realize former Balkan entente before the war states that

Turks

770.00/851
FILED
JAN 24 1942
PS/MH

Turks will do their best for Balkan reconciliation when peace returns, that neutrality alliance and friendship of Balkans are foundation of their future security and that Turco German friendship is linked to liberty and independence of Balkans.

Deputy Yalcihin in YENI SABAH declares that Greece and Yugoslavia have laid foundation of a future Balkan federation as bitter experience has taught Balkan states that only such a union can guarantee them free existence. For present however he continues Greece Yugoslavia and Turkey are only countries which can unite under its ideals and as in any case such a union will be possible only in event of Allied victory it is difficult to predict form Bulgaria or Rumania will take the War's end and Albania's place in Balkan Union must also not be forgotten.

TAN declares that new pact is in itself important since it reflects views of democracies as regards future order in Balkans and also demonstrates absurdity of allegations according to which this part of world will be ceded to Soviet influence.

KELLEY.

CSB

770.00/831

ROYAL GREEK LEGATION
WASHINGTON

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JAN 8 1942
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Confidential.

Memorandum.

The Greek Minister is instructed by his Government to inform His Excellency the Secretary of State the following:

The Greek and the Yugoslav Governments have reached ah agreement in view of the signature of a Pact aiming at the creation of a Balkan Union. For the time being, this Pact will bind only Greece and Yugoslavia, but it will constitute a general basic outline for the future organization of a Balkan Union.

The Pact in question is based on the principle: The Balkans for the Balkanic Peoples; it provides for the creation of common political and economic bodies; for a common General Staff besides the national ones; and for a permanent secretariat. It provides also for the coordination of the Foreign policy and concerted action; for an economic plan in view of the conclusion of a custom and monetary union. Finally, it provides for a common defense of their frontiers.

Washington, D. C., January 6, 1942.

770.00/832

870.00/42

FILED
JAN 22 1942

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JAN 20 1942
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

PS/NEA

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 11652, Sec. 3(E) and 5(D) or (E)
Authority NND 730032
By DR/KCM NARS, Date 2/3/75

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JAN 8 1942
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ROYAL YUGOSLAV LEGATION
WASHINGTON

~~Confidential~~

No. 10

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JAN 10 1942
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

870.00/833 870.00/23

MEMORANDUM

The Yugoslav Minister is instructed by his Government to inform His Excellency the Secretary of State of the following:

The Yugoslav and the Greek Governments have reached an agreement in view of the signature of a Pact aiming at the creation of a Balkan Union. For the time being this pact will bind only Yugoslavia and Greece but it will constitute a general basic outline for the future organization of a Balkan Union.

The pact in question is based on the principle: The Balkans for the Balkanic Peoples; it provides for the creation of common political and economic bodies; for a common General Staff besides the national ones; and for a permanent secretariat. It provides also for the coordination of the Foreign policy and concerted action; for an economic plan in view of the conclusion of a custom and monetary union. Finally it provides for a common defense of their frontiers.--

Washington, D. C., January 6, 1942.

FILED
JAN 22 1942

PS/MW

SVOLSKY

DCRE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
RECEIVED
JAN 7 - 1942
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

DATE: JANUARY 6, 1942

SUBJECT: BALKAN UNION

PARTICIPANTS: SECRETARY OF STATE HULL, MR. CONSTANTIN FOTITCH, MINISTER OF YUGOSLAVIA AND MR. CIMON DIAMANTOPOULOS, MINISTER OF GREECE

COPIES TO:

GPO 1—1493

The Yugoslav and Greek Ministers called and each handed me a copy of a memorandum (copies attached) relating to the creation of a Balkan union, as they termed it. I thanked them for their courtesy in calling and said that I would be interested to read their documents. I carefully refrained from any reference whatever to their merits or demerits.

C.H.

S CH:MA

F.W.770.00/833
~~PW 870.00/23~~
PS/MW

S COPY:MA

Royal Yugoslav Legation
Washington

Confidential

No. 10

MEMORANDUM

The Yugoslav Minister is instructed by his Government to inform His Excellency the Secretary of State of the following:

The Yugoslav and the Greek Governments have reached an agreement in view of the signature of a Pact aiming at the creation of a Balkan Union. For the time being this pact will bind only Yugoslavia and Greece but it will constitute a general basic outline for the future organization of a Balkan Union.

The pact in question is based on the principle: The Balkans for the Balkanic Peoples; it provides for the creation of common political and economic bodies; for a common General Staff besides the national ones; and for a permanent secretariat. It provides also for the coordination of the Foreign policy and concerted action; for an economic plan in view of the conclusion of a custom and monetary union. Finally it provides for a common defense of their frontiers.--

Washington, D. C., January 6, 1942.

S COPY:MA

ROYAL GREEK LEGATION
WASHINGTON

Memorandum.

Confidential.

The Greek Minister is instructed by his Government to inform His Excellency the Secretary of State the following:

The Greek and the Yugoslav Governments have reached an agreement in view of the signature of a Pact aiming at the creation of a Balkan Union. For the time being, this Pact will bind only Greece and Yugoslavia, but it will constitute a general basic outline for the future organization of a Balkan Union.

The Pact in question is based on the principle: The Balkans for the Balkanic Peoples; it provides for the creation of common political and economic bodies; for a common General Staff besides the national ones; and for a permanent secretariat. It provides also for the coordination of the Foreign policy and concerted action; for an economic plan in view of the conclusion of a custom and monetary union. Finally, it provides for a common defense of their frontiers.

Washington, D. C., January 6, 1942.

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

MAR 31 1943
DWR R
MR. PASVOLSKY

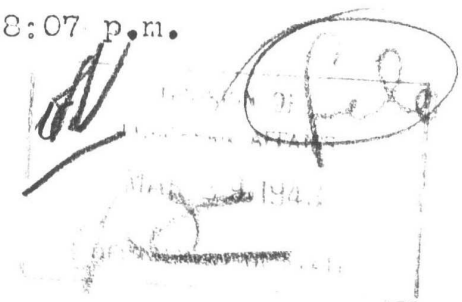
FROM

PLAIN

Bern

Dated March 26, 1943

Rec'd 8:07 p.m.



Secretary of State,

Washington.

1945, Twentysixth.

Rene Payot in JOURNAL DE GENEVE today states that "Turkish Government has just made an important diplomatic demarche in asking Rumanian Government if it is ready to consider reconstruction of the Balkan Entente".

Repeated to Ankara.

HARRISON

JRL

DIVISION OF POLITICAL STUDIES
APR 1943
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

770.00

770.00/834

PS/SS

APR 3 1943

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

FMH
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (SC)

Ankara

Dated March 29, 1943

FROM

Rec'd 12:15 p.m., 30th

Secretary of State,

Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
APR 8 - 1943
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

770.00/834

The following telegram has been repeated to

592, March 29, 4 p.m.

With reference to Bern's 1945 of March 26 to the Department quoting a statement which appeared in the JOURNAL DE GENEVE the Minister for Foreign Affairs in reply to my inquiry as to the accuracy of the statement remarked that the only basis he could think of was the casual question he had put some weeks ago to the Rumanian Minister as to whether in his opinion Rumania would at the end of the war be prepared to enter a Balkan confederation which might include Hungary. Numan emphasized that his question had been in no sense a demarche, had been quite casual and solely for the purpose of obtaining the Minister's reaction to the possibility of Rumania and Hungary being included in the same postwar confederation of states (see my 293, February 17).

Original filed in room 488

STEINHARDT

IRM

FILED
APR 8 - 1943

770.00

770.00/835

PS/MD

Con

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
near the Yugoslav Government

Yugoslav Series
No. 5.

London, January 6, 1942.

copy in Eu.
DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
JAN 27 1942
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
FEB 6 - 1942
MR. BERLE

SUBJECT: PROPOSED AGREEMENT BETWEEN YUGOSLAVIA AND GREECE FOR CREATION OF BALKAN UNION.

DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FEB 3 - 1942
copy sent E R
MR. PASVOLSKY

870.00/24
770.00/836

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

1/ I have the honor to enclose a translation, as made available to me by the Yugoslav Foreign Minister (Dr. Momtchilo Nintchitch), of a draft Agreement between the Yugoslav and Greek Governments concerning the creation of a Balkan Union. This Agreement has as yet not been signed, but Dr. Nintchitch tells me signature should take

FILED
FEB 6 1942
PS/S

take place at an early date.

After a preamble, stating that past experience has shown that the lack of a closer understanding between the Balkan peoples has been exploited by the Powers of aggression and that in order to assure the independence and peace of the Balkan States, the fundamental principle of their policy must be "The Balkans for the Balkan peoples", the Agreement outlines a plan for the creation of a Balkan Union, whose purposes are to be carried out by three "Organs", namely a Political Organ, an Economic and Financial Organ, and a Military Organ.

The Political Organ, which is very tenuous in outline and entirely consultative in character, is to be composed of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the signatories. This Organ will seek to "co-ordinate the foreign policy of the members with a view to enabling the Union to act in a uniform manner on the international plane", and will consult whenever vital foreign interests of the members of the Union are menaced. In addition, it will prepare projects for conciliation and arbitration agreements between the members of the Union and will undertake to set up various Commissions such as one for intellectual co-operation and another for the co-ordination of press activities with a view to effecting a rapprochement of public opinion between the members of the Union.

The aims of the Economic and Financial Organ include such concrete objectives as a customs Union,

common

common economic plans, improved means of communication and a Balkan monetary union.

The task of the Military Organ is to be the co-ordination of activities relating to collaboration between the armed forces of the members of the Balkan Union and the adoption of a common plan of defence and of uniform types of armament.

The Agreement likewise provides for the establishment of a Permanent Bureau which will form the Secretariat for the different Organs of the Union.

The signatories are to consider themselves bound by the provisions of the Agreement from the date of exchange of the instruments of ratification.

The Agreement is to be open to the future adherence of the other Balkan States.

The Agreement is patently an outline of aspirations and a very preliminary approach to a difficult problem. The real task of giving it substance, even as between the two Governments which have drawn it up, lies in the future. Dr. Nintchitch tells me, however, that the Greek and Yugoslav Governments have kept Mr.Sarajoglu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, informally advised of the progress of these negotiations. He adds that while Turkey's delicate situation renders official notification to Ankara inadvisable, Mr. Sarajoglu has discreetly indicated his sense of satisfaction with the outcome.

Respectfully yours,

A. J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

Enclosure: 1/ Agreement, as stated.
Transmitted in Quintuplicate.
RES:CAJ.

Enclosure to Despatch No. 5, Yugoslav Series,

dated January 6, 1942.

AGREEMENT

between

THE KINGDOM OF YUGOSLAVIA

and

THE KINGDOM OF GREECE

CONCERNING THE CONSTITUTION OF THE BALKAN UNION.

Having observed that past experience and more particularly very recent experience have demonstrated that the lack of a closer understanding between the Balkan peoples has been exploited by the powers of aggression in their aim at political and military penetration and imperialist domination in the Peninsula,

Considering that, in order to assure the independence and peace of the Balkan States, the fundamental principle of their policy must be the principle

"The Balkans for the Balkan Peoples"

His Majesty the King of Yugoslavia and His Majesty the King of the Hellenes have decided to conclude the present Agreement concerning the constitution of the Balkan Union and to that effect have named their Plenipotentiaries:

His Majesty the King of Yugoslavia, His Excellency General Douchan Simovitch, President of the Council of Ministers, Minister of the Interior, Minister of Aviation and Marine, and His Excellency Monsieur Momtchilo Nintchitch, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

His Majesty the King of the Hellenes, His Excellency Monsieur Emmanuel Tsouderos, President of the Council of Ministers, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and His Excellency Monsieur Charalambos Simopoulos, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

These, after a reciprocal communication of their plenary powers, which were found to be drawn up in good and due form, have agreed to the following dispositions:

CHAPTER I

CHAPTER I

THE ORGANS OF THE UNION

Art. 1. The organs of the Union which will meet at regular intervals are:

1) The Political Organ, constituted by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs:

2) The Economic and Financial Organ, constituted by two members of each Government competent in economic and financial matters.

Art. 2. The Permanent Military Organ. This organ in which the Governments will be represented by the Chiefs of the General Staffs, or by their representatives, will constitute a common General Staff of the national armed forces, beside the national General Staffs.

This organ will comprise two bureaux, one for the army and aviation and the other for the navy.

Art. 3. The Permanent Bureau will comprise two sections (Political, and Economic and Financial).

Art. 4. The Presidents of the Councils of Ministers of the States composing the Union will meet whenever circumstances require in order to discuss questions of a general order of interest to the Union.

Art. 5. Collaboration between the Parliaments. The Governments of the Union will facilitate regular meetings between Parliamentary delegations of the States of the Union, allowing these delegations to proceed to exchanges of views and to express their wishes on questions of common interest which would be submitted to them by the competent organs.

CHAPTER II

BUSINESS OF THE ORGANS OF THE UNION

Art. 6. The task of the Political Organ will be

(a) to co-ordinate the foreign policy of the members with a view to enabling the Union to act in a uniform manner on the international plane and to proceed to preliminary consultation at all times when vital exterior interests of the members of the union should be menaced,

(b) To prepare projects for agreements of conciliation and arbitration between the members of the Union;

The Political Organ will undertake the constitution of the following organisations:

(a)

(a) A Commission charged with the elaboration of agreements of intellectual co-operation between the members of the Union and with the supervision of their application;

(b) A Commission charged with the co-ordination of the efforts of the organs of the press in view of a rapprochement of public opinion in the States members of the Union and of the defence of their interests.

Art. 7. The task of the Economic and Financial Organ will be:

(a) To co-ordinate the policies of exterior commerce and the customs tariffs with a view to the conclusion of a customs union;

(b) To elaborate a common ecomomic plan for all the members of the Union;

(c) To study through special organs all the means which will permit of the amelioration of communications between the members of the Union (railways, roads, navigation by sea, air and river; posts, telephones and telegraphs), as well as tourist development within the Union.

(d) To prepare a draft agreement instituting a Balkan monetary union.

Art. 8. The task of the Military Organ will be to co-ordinate activities concerning the collaboration between the national armed forces of the members of the Union, the adoption of a common plan of defence and of a common type of armament, etc.

The mission of the armed forces of the Union will be to defend the European frontiers of the States of the Union.

Art. 9. The Permanent Bureau will form the Secretariat of the different organs of the Union and its task will be:

(a) to prepare the material for the labours of the organs of the Union;

(b) to study questions the solution of which may render more efficacious the political, and the economic and financial co-operation of the members of the Union;

(c) to supervise the application of the decisions of the organs of the Union.

CHAPTER III

Art.10. The High Contracting Parties declare that this Agreement presents the general foundations for the organisation of the Balkan Union. They consider

themselves

themselves bound by the foregoing dispositions from the date of the exchange of the instruments of ratification, and they envisage with satisfaction the future adhesion to this Agreement of other Balkan States ruled by Governments freely and legally constituted.

Art.11. The present Agreement will be ratified and the ratifications will be exchanged as soon as this shall be possible.

In witness whereof the representative Plenipotentiaries have hereto placed their Signatures and their Seals.

Done in London in duplicate original in French, on the day of January, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty Two.

LEGATION
~~EMBASSY~~ OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

near the Royal Yugoslav Government

London, January 16, 1942.

Yugoslav Series

No. 7.

SUBJECT: SIGNING OF YUGOSLAV-GREEK AGREEMENT FOR THE CREATION OF A BALKAN UNION.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FEB 19 1942
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
RECEIVED
FEB 16 1942
DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
FEB 17 1942
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[redacted]

770.00/837

770.00

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 12 1942
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS

PS/JTS

FILED
FEB 25 1942

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

Sir:

Referring to my despatch No. 5 of January 6, 1942 transmitting draft of a proposed Yugoslav-Greek Agreement for the creation of a Balkan Union and referring to my telegram No. 3 of yesterday's date reporting the signature of the Agreement, I have the honor to state that the ceremony of signature took place at the British Foreign Office, with Prime Minister Slobodan Jovanovitch and

Foreign/

Foreign Secretary Momtchilo Nintchitch signing on behalf of the Yugoslav Government and with Prime Minister Emmanuel Tsouderos and Under Secretary of State Charalambos Simopoulos signing on behalf of the Greek Government.

The Agreement is identical with the text submitted in my despatch No. 5 of January 6, 1942, except that the new Prime Minister, M. Jovanovitch, is included as one of the plenipotentiaries instead of the former Prime Minister General Simovitch.

At a luncheon following the signature of the Agreement, the King of the Hellenes and the King of Yugoslavia both made speeches outlining their hopes for the Agreement.

The former said he was sure that this Balkan Union affords the best means to the Balkan peoples of serving their true political and economic interests and is the surest guarantee of lasting peace.

The King of Yugoslavia felt that the Agreement was a new manifestation of the friendship of the Greek and Yugoslav peoples, based on the close community of their vital interests and of their mutual confidence, He believed, however, that the Agreement, even after the realisation of the Balkan Union, would not attain its full significance unless the rest of Europe was organised in such a way as

to/

to achieve a really new international order. He had reason to hope that beside the Balkan Union a Central European Union would be created on the basis of a Czechoslovak-Polish Agreement. In his opinion those two unions, concluded on the same principles and inspired by the same ideas, would create, together with a single common supreme organ, a great organisation which would give serious guarantees for the peace and prosperity of Europe.

Commenting editorially on the Agreement, THE TIMES of January 16 observes:

> "The Agreement ... bears evidence of all the advantages of statesmanship in detachment and carries of course its corresponding hazards. The eleven articles bind the two countries so closely together that, if they are carried into practice in the spirit in which they have been conceived, they will make the two States one in their international relations. The conception is wholly admirable... Within the wider framework that must uphold the future Europe, measures of closer union among the smaller States can alone secure their safety, their freedom and their way of life.
>
> "At the same time the negotiators will themselves certainly be the first to consider that their real task has hardly begun, can indeed only be begun in earnest by Governments

once

once more exercising authority on their own territories. That difficulties lie ahead does not detract in the least from the excellence of yesterday's treaty, which may indeed be a model for others of its kind."

Respectfully yours,

A.J. Drexel Biddle, Jr.

Transmitted in Quintuplicate.

RES:ETS.

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT

Italian position.

Inspite of pro-Nazi press, not believed that -, will be changed at present. Italy busily engaged in maintaining status quo in the Balkans.

eh

770.00/8111

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel#260 -1pm
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Apr 13, 1940 From / ~~To~~ Italy (Phillips)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/2171

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

BJS
This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (br.)

ROME

Dated April 13, 1940

Rec'd 11:05 a. m.

Secretary of State,

Washington

260 April 13, 1 p. m.

My No. 254, April 11, 3 p. m.

While today's Italian press continues to regard the naval battles in Scandinavian waters from the German viewpoint and Rome is flooded with rumors with regard to Italy's future position, while measures of a military and naval nature to accelerate improvements in the armed forces of the country are under way and while the Government presumably is resenting the new pressure which is being exercised by the British Control of Italian vessels in the Mediterranean, there are many other considerations that lead me to feel that the Italian Government has no intention at the present time of altering its present balanced position between the belligerents. There may be sudden shifts in the Cabinet, there may be an even stronger anti-British tone in Government circles and in the press but the more important considerations to be borne in mind are that the army is not prepared, the King is strongly opposed to Italy's participation in the war, the Vatican is undoubtedly exercising its peaceful influence and the present policy of both Germany and Italy is to preserve the status quo in the Balkans in order not to interfere with the supplies from these regions.

PHILLIPS

VEG

Note 770.00

217

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT

Riga conference, March 1940. Copy and translation of communique issued at the close of the conference of Baltic States on March 16.

770.00/812

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See #759
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Mar. 19, 1940 **From / To** Lithuania (Gufler)

File No. 500.A 21/201

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Balkan situation.

British desire only to maintain peace in Bulgaria and in the Balkans and will take no military action unless action is started by Germany or others.

mr

770.00/813

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #40, 7 pm
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated April 22, 1940 **From** Bulgaria (Earle)
To

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/2401

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

GGT

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Danger of German attack in the Balkans;

Conversation with the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs who feels encouraged regarding immediate,- Convinced that Italy will not move unless Germany takes the initiative.

mr

770.00/814

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #75, 6 p.m.
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Apr. 25, 1940 From / To Greece (MacVeagh)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/2491

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

814

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
APR 25 1940
MR. BERLE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
APR 25 1940
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS

April 25, 1940

A-B

Dear Mr. Berle:

This is an interesting bit of information sent me by the Turkish Ambassador.

770.00

Contacts like this between the Anglican and Orthodox churches have of course been frequent in recent years.

Wallace Murray

770.00/815

FILED
APR 26 1940

From BALTIMORE SUN, April 22nd, 1940.

SPIRITUAL DRIVE ON IN BALKANS, BRITISH SEND 3 BISHOPS, CANON

Prelates of Gibraltar, Gloucester and Southwark on Tour of Yugoslavia and Rumania

(Copyright by New York Times)

Belgrade, Yugoslavia, April 21

A British "spiritual offensive" in the Balkans opened today with the arrival here of the Bishop of Gibraltar, whose diocese extends throughout the Meditarranean littoral, accompanied by 75 year old Canon Douglas Peckham, of London. In Bucharest the bishops of Gloucester and Southwark are confering with Orthodox Church representatives.

After visting all southeast European capitals the same bishops and their large retinue of canons will meet in Belgrade for a three-day parley.

The Bishop of Gibraltar said that the purpose of his tour, which is believed to be unprecedented in Anglican history, was "to reaffirm the Christian spirit where it was threatened", adding "We shall not mince matters."

This tour has aroused interest here because it is believed that lately there have been contacts between the Pharnariot in Istanbul, from where the affairs of the Orthodox Church are managed, and the German Government. There have for many years been a number of Russian Orthodox bishops in Berlin, some of whom are supporters of the Nazi regime. In the past they have been used to aid Germany's plans of stirring up irredentism in the Polish Ukraine. Lately there have been credible reports that the Phararíot is to be excommunicate these Nazi bishops.

770.00/815

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Cohesive Balkan bloc.
Turkish Ambassador informs of chance of forming a - to defend themselves against aggression.

rr

770.00/816

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #244, noon
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated May 31, 1940 From / To Rumania (Gunther)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/3415

GRR

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Turkish proposal to the Yugoslav Government that the governments of the Balkan Entente should immediately declare general mobilization of all their land, sea and air forces; Yugoslavia's reply negative.

mr

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #235, 3 pm
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated June 4, 1940 From / To Yugoslavia (Lane)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/3500 Confidential File

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

770.00/817

GMS

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

3692

NOTE

SUBJECT Possibility of a Balkan military agreement.

Conversation with the new Yugoslav Ambassador regarding- He stated that his government would be most careful not to do anything which might be considered provocative by either Germany or Italy.

mr

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #259, 1 pm
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated June 11, 1940 From / To Rumania (Gunther)

File No. ~~740.0011 European War, 1939/~~3692

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

770.00/819

G-MT

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

820

NOTE

SUBJECT Anti-aggression pact between Rumania, Yugoslavia and Turkey.
Informs of Tass communique concerning -.

rr

770.00/320

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel.#689, 1 p.m.
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated June 17, 1940 From / To U.S.S.R. (Thurston)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/3859

G-TT

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1640

HSM

GRAY

Moscow

Dated June 17, 1940

Rec'd 11:08 a. m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

689, June 17, 1 p. m.

PRAVDA and IZVESTIYA this morning publish the following Tass communique:

"The English newspaper DAILY MAIL states that 'under the leadership of the U.S.S.R. new steps are being taken to conclude a stronger anti-aggression pact between Rumania, Yugoslavia and Turkey, the aim of which is to oppose German and Italian expansion in the East.'

Tass is authorized to state that this report of the DAILY MAIL fails entirely to correspond with the facts and is a complete figment of the imagination."

THURSTON

WSB

note 740.00

3859

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

821

NOTE

SUBJECT Although there is local concern with the possible disintegration of the Balkan system due to the Russian ultimatum to Rumania, as yet no indications have been received here of any preparations by Hungary or Bulgaria to take military steps at this moment.

mr

770.00/821

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #282, 9 pm
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated June 27, 1940 From / To Yugoslavia (Lane)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/4251

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

G-TT

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Members of Yugoslavia Government believe that Russia will make every endeavor to push its influence in the Balkans, especially in Rumania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

mr

770.00/822

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #501, 1 pm
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated July 10, 1940 **From** / **To** ~~Yugoslavia~~ (Lane)

File No. ~~740.0011 European War, 1939/4566~~

GRR

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

824

NOTE

SUBJECT Yugoslavia's first reaction to the Rumanian situation one of relief that war in the Balkans has been averted.

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel. #382, 4 pm
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Sept. 10, 1940 From / To Yugoslavia (Lane)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/5478

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

770.00/824

G-TT

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT

Rumanian Government's withdrawal from the Balkan Entente by oral declaration by the Rumanian Minister instead of by formal communication. Comments from the Yugoslav Foreign Minister regarding-.

770.00/ 828

FP

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel#419 7 p.m.
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Oct. 4, 1940 From ~~Tel~~ Yugoslavia (Lane)

File No. 762.65/958

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

ml

CROSS-REFERENCE FILE

NOTE

SUBJECT Meeting of British envoys in Ankara. Information obtained from the British Minister concerning purpose of the -, was for exchange of views and information on conditions in the Balkan countries.

rr

740.00/829

For the original paper from which reference is taken

See Tel.#144, 7 p.m.
(Despatch, telegram, instruction, letter, etc.)

Dated Oct. 23, 1940 From/To } Bulgaria (Earle)

File No. 740.0011 European War, 1939/6223

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1—1540

818

770.00/835

Confidential File

Central File: Decimal File 770.00, Political Relations Of States, Relations; Bi-Lateral Treaties., Balkan States And The World, Dec. 16, 1939 - Oct. 23, 1940. December 16, 1939 - October 23, 1940. MS Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States: Records of the U.S. Department of State, 1930-1944: Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations of Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States, 1940-1944. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5111396062%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbookmark-GDSC. Accessed 23 June 2025.